

**City of Gainesville  
Diversity Work Plan**

This work plan should be completed by Department Heads, Directors and Managers reporting directly to a Charter Officer.

**Name:** Bill Shepherd  
**Title:** Chief Customer Officer

**Department:** Customer Support Services  
**Date Completed:** 11/17/15

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**I. Introductory statement describing your department/division.**

**A. Based on the demographics of your department, list any diversity issues specific or unique to the areas in your span of control.**

Customer Support Services includes Energy & Business Services, Customer Service, Cashiers, Collections, Billing, Back Office, New Services, Purchasing, Administrative Services, Facilities, Mail Services, Security, Stores and Real Estate. Our department of about 120 employees is a very diverse group of individuals with the exception of Facilities Maintenance where all five employees are white males.

**B. List any barriers or other concerns you have for your entire span of control.**

It continues to be a challenge to have diversity in customer operations with the majority of employees being female. I would like to see more males represented in those areas. Also, the Facilities Maintenance group continues to be all white males. In Facilities Maintenance, we continue to experience difficulty in finding qualified women even when we have worked closely with OD to develop a hiring plan when openings have occurred. We continue to advertise in such a way to target as many female/minority groups as possible to increase the diversity of the applicant pools.

**II. What were your efforts to address diversity issues in the area(s) under your span of control in the last (evaluation) year?**

**A. List recruitment efforts/strategies employed for issues identified above.**

- We participate in the Career Fair sponsored by the City every year. We continue to make sure that all interview panels are diverse. We also reach out to the Guardian and other Minority Network groups to increase the number of minority applicants.
- For the FM coordinators position, we worked with OD and EO and developed a recruitment plan. We used the recommended advertising techniques for attracting qualified minority and women candidates. We advertised in Professional Women in Construction and National Association of Women in Construction – Gainesville web site. We also advertised in the Gainesville Sun and the Guardian. For the Stores opening we contacted the Diversity Recruiter in an attempt to find qualified minority candidates.
- The Utility Stores department was represented by Admin Services at the City of Gainesville Career Fair. For the Materials Specialist job that was just posted, we are publishing it in “The Guardian” and utilizing the HR minority e-mail distribution list in an effort to reach more potential minority applicants.
- To maintain diversity throughout, we’ve made a special effort to attain diverse interview groups when hiring to demonstrate the value of diversity to candidates and to allow for a broad perspective in evaluating potential candidates.
- We had the opportunity to fill vacancies in FY15 with both internal and external applicants. We take an active role in determining how jobs are posted, including utilizing the Guardian and other sites such as the Minority Professional Network.

### **B. List Retention and Personnel Development Strategies you employed.**

- Employees are given the opportunity to act in the place of others to gain experience and knowledge in the areas of supervision and management.
- The Customer Service area created a personal & career sheet with objectives that were set at the beginning of the year and revisited throughout the year to make sure that they are reaching those goals.
- Employees are encouraged to take advantage of classes offered by GCU and other career development organizations.
- Job progression is a focus within Customer Operations as well. To that end, and in order to improve our efficiency in helping customers, we operate a focused job shadowing program by which employees identify areas both within Customer Ops and outside that they have an interest in. We accommodate those requests to the best of our abilities.
- Employees are encouraged to continue professional development and participate in various training and certifications.
- All Utility Material Specialists participate in a Progression Through Training Program. Eight employees have completed the Senior program and the other one should finish shortly. The Senior UMS program prepares them to be a candidate for a Supervisor position or a Supply Chain Specialist. In March of 2013 a new warehouse supervisor for the Power Plants was selected from internal candidates. With the opportunity to advance through the PTTP program and receive pay increases, personnel have not felt the need to look elsewhere as much to increase their pay. We have also been able to change the atmosphere in Stores so it is a much more enjoyable and rewarding place to work than it was before.
- In Utility Stores, the manager talked with each employee and discussed where they want to be in five years and if it was not still in Stores, a suggested course of action was discussed to better prepare them to be qualified to be considered when the time comes.
- Several employees are currently enrolled in MBA programs and having their educational costs reimbursed in accordance with City policy.

### **III. Were those efforts successful?**

#### **A. Why/Why Not?**

- Yes they have been...
- On the HR recruiting end, in terms of using sites such as the Guardian or the Minority Professional Network, I would like to get feedback on how many applicants those placements result in. This would be helpful in determining if we should continue to use them or spend money trying other locations.
- For the Facilities Coordinator position we did have one women candidate that made it through the screening process and was interviewed, but she was not found to be the most qualified candidate. In the Stores process we interviewed 5 candidates that included 1 woman and 1 African American candidate. The woman was offered one of the jobs and she accepted, but later declined the offer because her employer counter offered. The African American candidate was not found to be acceptable after the interview.
- We were fortunate enough to interview some job fair attendees that stopped by the Customer Service table for upcoming positions. We interviewed job fair attendees for the customer accounts position and the customer service representative position.
- Yes, we had minimal turnover and recruited and hired an excellent supervisor for New Services, who happens to be minority and female.
- The senior level of the Progression Through Training Program is voluntary and not mandatory. All four of the women Utility Materials Specialists chose to enroll and participate. Three of the four have successfully completed the requirements and the fourth has part of one course module to complete. Although not required, one of them actually took two additional modules to gain expertise in another utility and in supply chain so she could better serve the needs at her location and prepare herself for

possible future advancement.

- The efforts were successful with employees, including a minority gaining professional certifications.

**B. How did you measure your efforts?**

- Certifications achieved or completions of educational programs.
- Populating positions with qualified minority &/or female applicants and experiencing minimal turnover in what has been a turbulent few years at GRU, are a testament to the efforts we have made.
- The leadership team met to discuss development of the employees and how to be effective leaders. Goals & Objectives were set and monitored throughout the year and feedback was given to the employees.
- The number of women and minorities who interviewed for jobs.
- We had no loss of employees to other companies. We did lose one male this year to an internal promotion to Lineman Apprentice. He was looking to advance his career and increase his pay long-term; it was not any dissatisfaction with his current job. It is something I expect to see with employees who are highly motivated and good performers.

**IV. What were your efforts to make employees aware of the benefits of diversity?**

**A. List your efforts here.**

- There are goals on all my manager's G's & O's to encourage their employees to become engaged with diversity.
- Employees attended Diversity Lunch & Learn Seminars and encourage other employees to attend. With relocation to the EOC, it is difficult for employees there to attend in person but with the live streaming now available several employees avail themselves of that. Even though their lunch time is only a half hour the stores manager allows his employees an hour to watch these sessions.
- There are various diversity topics on the monthly team meeting agenda four times in the past year for the stores group. Additionally several of the nine UMS's prepared and did a presentation on some aspect of diversity during team meetings during the year. Discussion has been good.
- During the year there have been several Team meetings where we have discussed a situation or problem in order to seek a course of action and a solution. The group has seen first hand and I have commented on the fact that everyone's different perspective and background has enabled us to reach a better solution than we would have otherwise.
- I also updated a section on what diversity is and the benefits of diversity that I had previously written and included it in the UMS Senior Training Module
- All direct reports to the AS Director had a diversity goal included in their objectives
- Departmental luncheons for our employees to get to know one another better
- The AS Director is a member of the Diversity Awareness Committee and regularly shares information with staff that is happening with the committee
- Require diverse interview panels.
- Encouraged participation of all employees in department meeting discussions to represent various points of view.
- Encouraged staff to schedule & carry out staff meetings on topics of concern in an effort to establish structured open communication.
- In Customer Service, discussions are held during supervisor's meetings. Employees are encouraged to attend Diversity Awareness workshops.

## V. What were your Women/Minority-Owned Small Business efforts last year?

### A. List your efforts here?

- The purchasing activities within customer operations are low in comparison to most departments. We are conscious of the benefits and use local resources where possible such as in purchasing supplies, small office equipment and meals.
- Administrative Services(AS) has participated regularly in the EO committee meetings and information from these meetings is shared with AS staff
- Attendance at Diversity Lunch and Learn meetings held by Community Relations
- AS participated in the UF Small Business Fair and Tradeshow
- Purchasing attended the Florida Minority Supplier Development Council (FMSDC) events
- Purchasing attended the Florida State of Florida annual Match Maker Conference and Trade Show
- AS attended and presented at the EO small business workshops
- Purchasing released on a monthly basis 'Minority Business of the Month' to managers
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### B. What can you do differently next year to improve?

- Continue to be on the lookout for other opportunities to use women/minority owned small businesses as identified by Purchasing. With budget cuts there will be even less money to spend than this past year.
- Now that there is a new Director, Purchasing will work with that person to inform him of the things we have done in the past and collaborate with him to find new ways to improve in this area.
- *Our Managers and supervisors will continue to look at the benefits as well as attend any functions or workshops that increase exposure & knowledge of these businesses.*
- Encourage adherence to The Purchasing Department's Guidelines that target women/minority-owned business when services are needed.
- Establish and maintain relations with businesses who share similar diversity concerns.
- Expand the type of contractors in the LEEP<sup>plus</sup> Partnering Contractor Program to include more Women/Minority Owned small businesses.

## VI. Departmental Strategic Plan

Work with your direct reports to develop your department's overall Strategic Plan to address diversity issues this evaluation year. Your plan should address the strategies listed below. You will use this strategy as the basis for your Diversity objective on your Performance Evaluation Plan.

### • Recruitment Strategies

- Support interview panels across the organization with women and minority employees.
- Encourage minority employees to continue professional development & offer opportunities to participate in professional development training and programs
- Utilize HR assistance to attract diverse candidate pools for 100% of positions that have diversity goals.
- There is an opening for a UMS 1 in 2016 to prepare to backfill someone leaving in 2017. Since the last advertisement yielded a good number of minorities, the plan is to try to tweaking things a bit so we might attract a larger pool of local minority and women candidates. We will utilize HR/OD and EO and any suggestions they might have for expanding the pool like advertising in the "Guardian" and utilizing their minority focused e-mail list.

## **B. Retention Strategies**

### **(1) Professional Development for all Employees**

- Continue to encourage folks to attend professional development through GCU and utilize tuition reimbursement to pursue higher learning, and shadow other areas of interest.
- We are rotating employees on a two month cycle between warehouses to expose them to other departments and customers within GRU.
- Continue with training at both internal and external sources, continue to have the less senior employees fill in for the more senior ones when they are out of the office to gain experience.
- Coach employees individually on aspects involving their jobs. Specifically in Stores continue to tweak the PTT program.

### **(2) Strategies to Foster an Environment of Diversity and Inclusion**

- Encourage staff to attend diversity awareness workshops and training. Provide a “family” and “friendly” environment that is inclusive of all, by which employees find work and their coworkers enjoyable.
- Host Diversity and Inclusion workshop for department
- Encourage employees to have self-direct staff meetings (without manager) to openly discuss issues, concerns and/or procedures and self-designate someone to update manager of any issues, desires and/or resolutions.
- Continue to encourage participation in the Diversity Lunch and Learn Meetings for all employees. Make some aspect of Diversity a topic at least three times a year at monthly Team meetings. When the opportunity presents itself continue to point out and emphasize benefits we see from diversity and inclusion.

## **C. Women/Minority-Owned Small Business Strategies**

- Customer Operations does not have frequent needs to secure contracts/services, but when it does occur we keep this in mind.
- Customer Service will continue to utilize Women/Minority-Owned Small Businesses for supplies and catering, where applicable  
Support training of existing and new women/minority-owned businesses through The LEEP<sup>plus</sup> Partnering Contractor Program
- Use of The Purchasing Department’s Guidelines to ensure opportunities are available for new businesses to promote to a diverse vendor audience.
- As mentioned above reach out to and collaborate with the new OEO Director to identify and reach more MBE and WBE.
- Participate regularly in the EO committee meetings
- Attend the UF Small Business Fair and Tradeshow
- Participate in Florida Minority Supplier Development Council (FMSDC) events
- The AS Director will continue to attend the Florida State of Florida annual Match Maker Conference and Trade Show
- The AS Director will attend and present at the COG small business workshops
- Purchasing and AS Director will work with GRU’s Managers to include encouragement in the budgeting process to evaluate projects up front to try and identify SBEs that they can use for in the upcoming FYs and to breakdown projects into smaller ones to enable more SBE participation.
- AS will work with CSS Analysts to develop better tracking methods on Women/Minority dollars

spent so they can see where they can improve.

**D. How will you measure your department's success?**

- Diverse applicant pools, interview panels, and the achievement of Diversity Goals amongst the leadership in Customer Operations.
- We will look at the report prepared by HR on "Applicant Flow by Ethnicity and Gender" to measure how well we are doing in attracting minorities and African Americans.
- Dollars spent with MBE/WBE