



NACE Action Plan for Black Community Support, Diversity and Inclusion

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WHY THIS IS NEEDED

We must acknowledge that the United States carries with it a national issue of systemic racism, oppression, and inequality that stretches back hundreds of years. Most recently, the murder of George Floyd while in police custody has unleashed an urgent and necessary conversation about what it means to be Black in America. These life-long and generational injustices placed on Black Americans are being highlighted in an unprecedented national and international forum. It lays bare the scope and scale, and highlights how all American institutions can and must change and do better.

The catering and events industry is not immune to the issues of discrimination and racism. As one of the largest associations within our industry, it is time for NACE to join the conversation in a meaningful way that is true to our values and mission, and to commit to a course of action that makes us more representative, diverse, and inclusive.

According to the most recent available data, NACE membership is less than 6% black, while across the United States, Black people make up about 12.1% of the events industry workforce ([source](#)). We are not representative of the industry, which means that the cry for allyship is not felt as tangibly as it may be if we were.

As an organization, NACE can and must make changes now that will help the organization advance toward being a representative and inclusive organization consistent with our mission, values, and ethics.

Race/Ethnicity of NACE Members

Race/Ethnicity	Representation
White or Caucasian	82.80%
Black or African American	5.29%
Hispanic or Latino	5.03%
Asian or Asian American	3.44%
Another race	1.32%
American Indian or Alaska Native	1.06%
Prefer not to say	1.06%
Total	100.00%

[Source: 2019 NACE Member Census]

FOCUS OF THE ACTION PLAN

NACE's mission is to be the premier resource and community for catering and event professionals. We have the vision to be the catalyst for exceptionalism and evolution for catering and event professionals. Our goal should be to stay true to our mission and vision even when it is uncomfortable, and to work with truth and conviction to improve NACE as an organization.

An initial scope for NACE is to focus where we, as a community, have the ability to directly affect outcomes. Those outcomes should advance NACE toward being a representative and inclusive organization consistent with our mission, vision, values and ethics. This includes addressing gaps in knowledge within the NACE community about racial issues within the catering and events industry.

Being a premier resource in this context means providing education to our members on:

- How racial injustices and biases directly affect the lives and livelihoods of Black NACE members and Black catering and event professionals
- Resources they can use to educate themselves on discrimination on a broader level and specifically as it relates to catering and events
- How they can be supportive on social media and what messaging they can use
- What *not* to do or say, including why staying silent is an act of complicity
- Terminology, including words like anti-racism
- Tangible steps they can take within their businesses and communities to be part of a solution

We cannot be exceptional as an organization if we ignore issues that affect our community, the clients of our members, and our nation. NACE must provide members with the tools they need to continue evolving as informed professionals.

Right now, one of the most powerful things we can do as an organization is to work in the interest of equity and inclusion for Black NACE members.

This means,

- Regularly celebrating the accomplishments of Black NACE members
- Inviting Black educators and speakers to share their experience and expertise
- Cultivating Black leadership at both the local and national levels and
- Ensuring that Black voices are heard and included equitably

It also means encouraging White members to stand up as allies to the Black community. Including asking White members to:

- Take on the struggle as your own
- Stand up, even if they feel scared

- Transfer the benefits of White privilege to those who lack it
- Encourage White members to acknowledge that while they, too, feel pain, the conversation is not about White members ([Source](#))

Committing to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion aligns with NACE's values and supports the section of our code of ethics that says, "NACE members will foster an open and welcoming environment respectful of all members regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity, family responsibility, political affiliation, or disability."

Fostering a welcoming environment is not passive agreement that racism is wrong. In our current climate, it means being proactively anti-racist when it comes to issues that affect the black community.

INITIAL ACTION PLAN

Note: After discussing the issues with the Black Caucus (see below), these action items may be adjusted.

Immediate Actions (within one month)

- Develop and speak a public stance on Black Lives Matter movement, not because it is political but rather because a) it's of national importance and b) because it matters to many of our members.
- Post 3 times per week for the next 2 weeks about how to positively support Black members of the event community.
- Invite Black NACE members to a Black Caucus where they can talk about what support looks like to them and what their expectations are from NACE. The recommendation is that the forum be attended by Black members and that a representative would take the learnings back to the board and staff. The goal would be to facilitate timely discussions about systemic inequality and becoming a more equitable organization for our Black members specifically.
- Kick off a multi-part webinar series on anti-racism, celebration of Black event professionals, and how to be an ally. Leverage the expertise of people from within the industry and professionals who are trained to address sociological issues.
- Develop a communication resource toolkit for chapters with talking points, sample messages, social media squares, pledge badge, and other resources. Chapter leaders and members need to have clarity on where NACE stands and how they can be part of the conversation.

Mid-Term Actions (within 1-2 months)

- Identify partnership opportunities with other organizations in support of this plan.
- Continued weekly messaging from the board about uplifting and supporting our Black community members, diversity, inclusion, and equity.
- Launch a survey to gauge knowledge of racial and minority issues and then repeat the survey once programs have been implemented to measure progress.
- Conduct additional research on Black representation among chapter leadership.

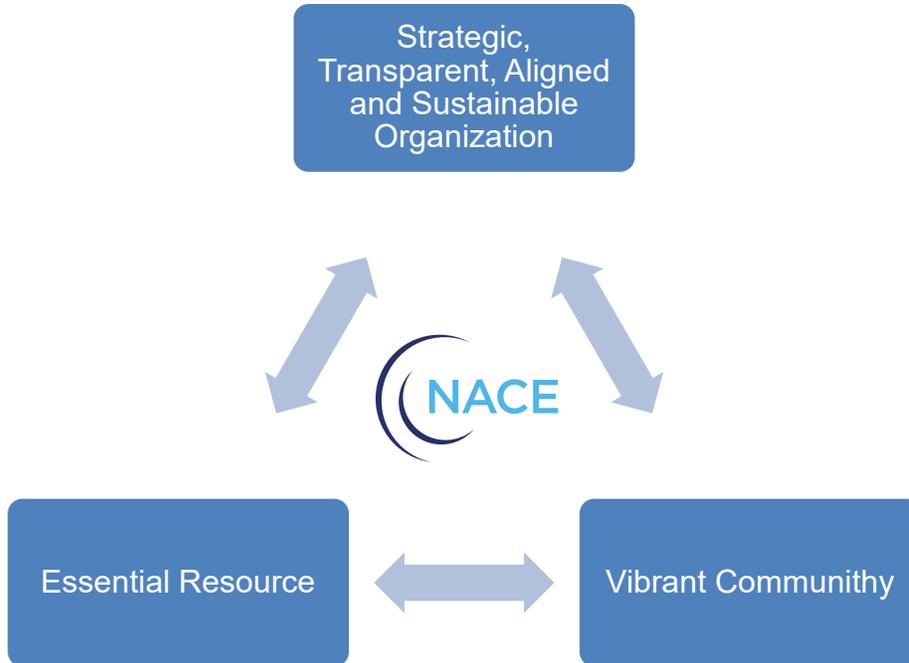
- Transition the Black Caucus to an official NACE Diversity Committee. The issues to tackle most immediately would surround those of the Black community, but within 6 months it could expand to address a broader scope of diversity of all types.

Long-Term Action Item Recommendations (2 months and beyond)

- Diversity & Inclusion Training for NACE Board, Foundation of NACE Trustees, and Staff.
- Diversity & Inclusion Training for chapter leaders and members at Evolve 2021.
- Develop a program to encourage Black and minority members to take on leadership positions at the chapter level. This is the first step toward National Board service.
- Develop a resource library on the NACE website to educate members and non-members about the issues. This could include where to donate, resources, terminology, cultural sensitivity training, etc.
- Inclusion of Black event professionals in our content pillars and editorial calendar.
- Active outreach to complementary Black organizations, allied associations, CPCE Preferred Providers, publications, and media outlets for partnership.
- Create additional networking opportunities at Evolve and Experience.
- Integrating Black Lives Matter and diversity messaging into our larger project planning, with continuous check-ins to ensure progress.
- Auditing our messaging platforms quarterly to ensure we are continuing to support the Black community and inclusivity in our blogs, webinars, and educational material.
- Make pathways to volunteer leadership at chapter and national levels more visible, transparent, and accessible.
- Develop outreach specifically targeted at introducing NACE to Black event professionals and encouraging them to become members.

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

NACE'S strategic direction is guided by three strategic pillars: being an **essential resource** for all catering and event professionals across their careers; fostering a **strong, vibrant community** through our local chapters, national networks and social channels; and remaining a **strategic, transparent, aligned and sustainable organization** through open communication, strong partnerships and effective business operations.



To create meaningful progress as an organization at the national, chapter, and individual member levels, we need to approach these issues as **strategic imperatives** that must be addressed in order to achieve any sustainable future vision of NACE.

The following grid aligns action steps – prioritized as immediate, short-term and long-term – with our strategic pillars. In some cases, actions will speak to more than one pillar, in which case they are located in the pillar where the core, most meaningful impact is created. Immediate actions over the next month will speak out and educate on key issues plaguing the black community. Mid and long-term actions will develop systemic solutions to a systemic problem.

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

	Essential Resource	Vibrant Community	Strategic, Transparent, Aligned and Sustainable
Immediate (1 month)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webinar series on anti-racism, celebration of Black event professional, and how to be an ally • Promote chapter webinars, content, and resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post 3 times per week for the next 2 weeks about how to positively support Black members of the event community • Communication toolkit for chapters • Invite Black NACE members to a Black Caucus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and speak a public stance on Black Lives Matter
Short-Term (1-2 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create curated section on nace.net for relevant content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition Black Caucus to Diversity Committee, initially focused on the black community and related issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify partnership opportunities with the Foundation of NACE in support of this plan • Continued supportive messaging through all channels • Launch a survey to gauge knowledge of racial and minority issues
Long-Term (2+ months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a resource library on nace.net providing education on the issues • Inclusion of Black event professionals in our content pillars and editorial calendar • Create additional networking opportunities at Evolve and Experience • Auditing our messaging platforms quarterly to ensure we are continuing to support the Black community and inclusivity in our blogs, webinars, and educational material • Make pathways to volunteer leadership at chapter and national 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity and Inclusion training for Chapter Leaders at Evolve 2021 • Conduct additional research on black representation among chapter leadership • Outreach to introduce NACE to Black event professionals for membership recruitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeat racial and minority issues survey to measure progress • Diversity and Inclusion training for NACE and Foundation national leaders and staff • Develop a program to encourage Black and minority members to lead at chapter and national levels • Active outreach to complementary Black organizations, allied associations, CPCE Preferred Providers, publications and media outlets for partnership • Integrating BLM and diversity messaging into our larger project planning

	levels more visible, transparent, and accessible		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct a strategic governance review to identify barriers to chapter and national service
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WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

Through this action plan, NACE will create and foster a safe, supportive environment for our members, Black and non-black, to engage in discussion, educate themselves, and take action.

Collectively as NACE, the Foundation of NACE, our chapters, our members and our partners we will be successful when we:

- Engage Black meeting professionals in a Black Caucus and listen and respond to the requests and guidance we receive
- Provide chapters with training and resources and see 75% or more of our chapters engaging in this plan
- Increase the knowledge of racial issues and develop members to be actively anti-racist, as measured by awareness surveys
- Increase the percentage of Black members to at least 12%, which is representative of the industry as a whole
- Increase the percentage of Black members who are chapter leaders or chapter committee chairs
- Increase the number of Black catering and event professions we see on our online forums - social media, blog, and webinars by 25%

Our actions now will determine how we are viewed, and our destiny, as an organization for years to come. A sustainable future for NACE relies upon the community getting behind this and future diversity and inclusion plans and creating change.