

INNOVATION MINUTE

Diversity & Inclusion

Partners in Peril

Your organization has been working collaboratively with Friends Forever Foundation for three years to address health disparities in the community. Both of your organizations believe that all people were created equally, and therefore should have opportunities for equitable health outcomes. Yet, the community faces years of what seem to be insurmountable disparities.

Together, you've been hosting events to educate the community about the disparities and to spotlight best practices from across the country. Each of the events have been well attended and have received positive media coverage. You and your team feel that you're making a big difference. You've also just created a grants program focused on organizations addressing disparities. Though the RFP is solely yours, you and the Forever Friends Foundation have agreed to jointly review the grant appli-

cations to identify possible opportunities for continued partnership.

Today you received a call from Susan, the President of the Forever Friends Foundation. Susan told you that while talking with her staff she learned that several community leaders are concerned with your organizations ability and willingness to work in diverse communities.

You instantly ask, "What are they talking about? Don't they know how committed we are? Haven't they heard about all of the programs we've been hosting with you to raise awareness about the disparities facing them?"

After a long pause, Susan explains that the concerns aren't really related to the programs at all. It seems that after attending one of your recent programs, leaders visited your website where they didn't see any references to diversity and inclusion. They also visited your staff page

and saw very little representation of people of color. Further, as these leaders talked to each other, they also realized that none of them had met anyone from your staff or board. They've started to ask if your foundation truly wants to improve conditions in the community long-term, or if you're simply drawn to health disparities as a hot topic.

Susan explains that these are not her concerns, but the fact that community leaders have raised these questions is challenging to her. Susan wants to be sure that these concerns don't reflect negatively on Friends Forever Foundation because of their relationship with your organization. She tells you that Friends Forever faced similar challenges about five years ago, and their board and leadership team worked hard to overcome them. She can't afford to risk the progress they've achieved and asks you to consider these concerns and get back to her.

Organizational Success Factors

Strategy

Intentionality

Commitment

Evaluation



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