October 10, 2024 DEI Working Group Call

Attendees: Anna Sjodin, Rachel Torres, Antoinette Abeyta, Dave Klinges, Alyssa Willson, Jason McLachlan, John Zobitz

Agenda/Notes:

1. Check in with Rachel about her connection with EFISA co-chairs about mentoring/teaching discussion
   a. Initially thinking about connecting with the group and joining calls.
   b. Rachel didn't receive training for teaching as grad school so had to search it out, particularly for teaching coding/technical
   c. Turned into thinking about other ways to connect grad students with undergrads at Cal Poly Humboldt.
   d. Long term mentorship seems ambitious for remote mentoring. But want to try out a 1-day workshop to show what people in EFISA are doing and include a training opportunity - using the beetle forecasting workshop materials and intro to R
   e. Dave had done something similar with EFISA - in 2021 there was a training workshop. Could share materials from that
      i. Dave interested in helping out in a
   f. There are videos on EFI YouTube - 1 day workshop before the education-focused conference
      i. Early career people gave lectures across the forecasting workflow.
      ii. Kathryn Wheeler - getting drivers
      iii. Submitting to the challenge
      iv. Think there was a GitHub repo. Alyssa will look for it
      v. Find videos and GitHub here: https://ecoforecast.org/ecological-forecasting-early-career-annual-meeting/
      vi. Sessions were well done and would be useful to do it again.
   g. Do this workshop before the EFI2025 conference to help people start making connections
   h. The national association of geoscience teachers hosts a regular workshop on preparing for an academic career/future faculty program. It is really nice and effective. Maybe EFI could do something similar?
      i. https://serc.carleton.edu/NAGTWorkshops/careerprep/index.html
      ii. EFI workshop looks technical
      iii. This NAGT workshop is useful for putting together your statement/dossier and they also have one for early career faculty
   i. Might also be able to use the Microsystems eddie modules for an undergrad workshop

2. Update about broadening participation in EFI - Dave Klinges
   a. Google Drive folder with membership demographic visualizations, which are updated regularly. The new subdirectory trends_vs_events has new figures that

isolate trends in particular minority demographics over time, relative to specific
EFI events

    i.   Impact of outreach events, especially those focused on DEI, is not clearly shown here. I don't think that means there's no impact, however. I think it's just not shown in the membership tracking. We could use other data sources….

        1.   Do we think the Qualtrics survey is a thorough enough net that captures engagement in EFI?

            a.   In the past, we haven't had the resources to send out surveys (Jody's time) and analyze those surveys (Dave's time)

            b.   Should we double down on info from the Qualtrics survey or does it already tell us something we already know

    ii.   Y-axis is proportion of minorities (anyone who identifies as non-white) - proportion has increased, but then leveled off in 2022

        1.   Black = empirical trend, orange = estimated trend (not needed since the black is obvious, but it will be used for other analyses)

    iii.   Is it worth pulling out break points or specific events to indicate if certain initiatives have been successful

    iv.   For Europeans - looked to see if there was an impact of the EFI 2024 Conference in gaining new European members

    v.   Would be useful to plot the number of individuals in those groups and how that number changes over time in addition to the proportion. You can have a growth/increase of members but because you are normalizing it, you might not see the increase

    vi.   Dropping off isn't necessarily a bad thing - we are maintaining membership

    vii.   Can we look at if new people stay? We could use the membership information for this, but Jody needs to develop a streamlined system for membership renewals

        1.   Plan is to have everyone re-fill out survey every 3 years (or 30 months, longest time that Qualtrics will allow)

        2.   Qualtrics sends notifications for whom is overdue. But additional follow-up necessary as not everyone will fill out again

        3.   Dave can add functionality to check if someone has already filled out survey

    viii.   Be specific about the reason for why this is timely and we should do this now

        1.   Is it that at EFI2025 we will want to provide an update

        2.   For survey/demographics. Could ask questions if there is something DEI related that EFI should be doing.

            a.   Template email for new members. Mentioning new DEI initiatives may get a bit lost in this email

3. Could add a question to the Qualtrics survey to have renewing members to jump to a new survey that answers some additional questions about what EFI can do to support DEI efforts

ix. Next steps Dave will keep going on the membership surveys and then keep in mind future goals
1. Keep working on trends pertinent to particular events
2. Identify a list of new questions to possibly add to Qualtrics survey for EFI membres that are renewing their membership
3. Aim to work towards a steady analytical pipeline that doubles down on using Qualtrics membership survey

b. Something Dave wants to do but still hasn't gotten to: External baseline representation: what is the broader demographic representation of ecoforecasting?
i. reach out to journals, ask who's downloaded/cited 1-2 important EF papers (John's suggestion)
ii. look at demographic representation of ecology or academia (eg here, paper here). Probably will need to be US-focused, but at EFI 2024 in Finland we can solicit input and expand out
iii. Geographic rep: see this figure (sources here, here, here). Figure in review (Nick sent it) but will be sent out when published

3. Reminder about the EFI DEI Working Group Strategic Plan - 5 steps identified
a. Identify and clarify the problem - what are the basic barriers we face in diversifying EFI?
b. Identify barriers that prevent students from underrepresented groups to participate in ecological forecasting as a career
c. Identify possible solutions that could be taken
d. Identify which solutions identified above to start with
e. Identify who else needs to be involved in the process
f. Form collaborations and seek funding

4. Potential Ideas for Activities for the Group
a. What do people need support with?
b. List of Activities that could intersect with the Working Group
c. Other activities brainstormed in the past
i. Assess and compile list of things the DEI working group has done related to the 5 steps from the Strategic Plan
ii. JEDI Database - compiling, exploring measurements of diversity within the ecological forecasting community. This is something Dave is interested in and has been slowly working on as he has time
1. What else could the analyses be used for other than using the database for internal updates for the Steering Committee or conferences?

a. Use this to define what it means to be "successful" in diversifying EFI
b. Use this to write some reflection paper/blog about the success or pitfalls of dei efforts
   iii. Preparing for the EFI 2024 Conference presentation (Done)
   iv. Barriers to Inclusivity in Ecological Forecasting - moving from blog post material to a publication
   1. Perhaps we are not ready for a full manuscript. But maybe we could take just one step to think about how to share the table? Antoinette has had ideas in the past, so it would be best for her to provide guidance
   v. Read and discuss papers

5. What are our constraints and what timeline and who can lead an activity. Do any of the activities above spark joy in people?
   a. Can we look into the teams submitting to the challenge - what does the makeup of the teams look like in terms of aspects of backgrounds, institutions
      i. Not sure there are many teams submitting at this time since we haven't had any big pushes for getting submissions to any of the challenges.
      ii. Could look at teams that submitted to the phenology challenge - but will want to think about what "success" is since only 1 team beat the null model
   b. Read info about DEI bans or the status of DEI. How are groups handling new legislation and the impact on funding components
      i. How do you prepare for a certain political outcome.
      ii. Rachel can look for information, Dave can also look
      iii. Look for proactive ways to handle changing realities.