The Valuing Diversity Project
Final Report

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PREFACE

This report was produced by the Association for the Study and Development of Community (ASDC) on behalf of the American Psychological Association's (APA) Public Interest Directorate for the Valuing Diversity Project. Henry Tomes, Executive Director and Shirlene Archer, Director of Administration and Board Operations for the Directorate provided guidance and leadership for the project. The Society for Community Research and Action (APA Division 27) also provided sponsorship support and participated in the Working Group for the project. The following ASDC staff contributed to this report: David Chavis who served as the Project Officer, Kien Lee (Senior Associate), Rachael Gibson (Research Assistant), and Ilana Sabban (Project Assistant).

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1. PROJECT SUMMARY

1.1 Purpose and Goals

The primary purpose of the Valuing Diversity Project was to enhance the capacity of professional psychology to assist communities in addressing issues related to diversity. The project had three objectives:

- To assist two communities in the adoption and adaptation of model efforts to improve intergroup relations and to increase the value of diversity;
- To assemble a database of relevant psychological literature and model strategies that can assist communities in addressing issues related to diversity; and
- To disseminate the lessons learned and resources developed through this project to communities across the country as well as to intermediary organizations, foundations, and government agencies whose mission is to assist communities in improving intergroup relations and promoting diversity.

Valuing diversity is what institutions and members of a community do to acknowledge the benefits of their differences and similarities. They intentionally work to build sustainable relationships among people and institutions with diverse membership. A community that values diversity ensures that institutions provide equal treatment and access to resources and decisions for all community members regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and physical disability.

This project was sponsored by the American Psychological Association's (APA) Public Interest Directorate, which is committed to applying professional psychology to help address contemporary public issues.

1.2 Project Structure

The Valuing Diversity Project was overseen by the Executive Director of APA's Public Interest Directorate and advised by a Working Group composed of seven members of the Society of Community Research and Action (SCRA). These seven individuals are psychologists with substantive knowledge and experience in addressing topics related to diversity. The Association for the Study and Development of Community (ASDC) was responsible for managing the project, maintaining communications with the Directorate, its Board for the Advancement of Psychology in the Public Interest (BAPPI), and the Working Group, as well as working with community representatives that participated in the project. A cadre of experts that included psychologists who has participated in the research and implementation of related community initiatives provided additional assistance for identifying resources and reviewing plans, activities, and products.

In the overall design, there were two types of community partners for the Valuing Diversity Project:

- Communities that wanted to value diversity better and who received funds from the Valuing Diversity Project to support their goals ("grantees"); and
- Communities that have promising strategies for valuing diversity and who could be resources to other communities, including the project's grantees.

1.3 Project Activities and Products

The project consists of the following major activities:

- Further development of principles for valuing diversity;
- Assistance to two community organizations in their implementation of valuing diversity strategies;
- Development of databases on promising strategies and resources for valuing diversity; and
- Engagement of professional psychology to assist communities and other professionals in addressing issues related to diversity.

Section 2 of this report describes the accomplishments of the Valuing Diversity Project. The accomplishments are organized according to these activities. Section 3 summarizes the lessons learned of the project.

2. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

2.1 Principles for Valuing Diversity

A set of principles was used to aid in the selection and screening of promising strategies for valuing diversity and to assist grantees in the planning and implementation of their Valuing Diversity Projects. These principles had been previously developed by ASDC based on a review of psychological literature concerning intergroup relations and diversity training. The Working Group and cadre of experts were called upon to expand and improve the existing principles. The principles are shown in Figure 1.

2.2 Implementation of Valuing Diversity Projects by Grantees

At the beginning of the Valuing Diversity Project in June 2000, the Working Group established criteria for selecting communities that would receive a $25,000 grant from the project to help them value their diversity. Based on the criteria, an application form was developed and distributed through the following avenues:

- Direct mailing to 53 organizations that have missions related to valuing diversity;

- Foundations that have intergroup relations programs or that provide funding support for addressing diversity issues;
- Ten listserves that address issues related to community building and diversity; and
- The Valuing Diversity web site.

Figure 1: Principles for Valuing Diversity

1. Engage and involve the appropriate leaders in the planning, implementation, and evaluation process.
2. Identify an important common issue that affects two or more groups and work towards common goals to address the issue. Each group must have a distinct and clear role that reflects its unique and complementary strength.
3. Bring together people and organizations that represent different groups and treat them as equals.
4. Provide and support opportunities for members of groups to get to know one another as individuals and learn to respect each other's cultures and traditions.
5. Provide and support opportunities to identify similarities between groups and at the same time, appreciate each group's history and unique characteristics in order to find common ground.
6. Identify each group's strengths or assets (e.g., culture, language, history, relations, etc.) and use and exchange them as part of the intergroup process.
7. Identify, respect, and transform conflicts into improved capacity and relations.
8. Celebrate, share, and build on successfully completed collective action because it not only improves the communities that groups live in, but also strengthens their relations.
9. Support and sustain relationship building at multiple levels (between individuals, groups, institutions, and communities) to maintain the process for strengthening intergroup relations and fostering equity.
10. Obtain institutional support for promoting intergroup relations and equity.
11. To be effective, implement intergroup strategies at multiple levels, including the individual, group, and institutional levels.

Out of the 12 applications received, the Working Group selected three that met the criteria. ASDC conducted follow up conference calls with the finalists to obtain answers to the Working Group's concerns and questions. The Slavic Village Development (SVD) in Cleveland, Ohio, and Towards A More Perfect Union (TAMPU) in West Palm Beach, Florida, were selected to be the project's grantees. In addition to the $25,000 grant, $10,000 was allocated to each organization for local facilitation and other support. The organizations selected their own facilitators who helped the organizations plan, implement, and monitor their projects. The facilitators were expected to work directly with ASDC.

An evaluation of the two grantees' valuing diversity projects was conducted by ASDC. The evaluation consisted of two check-ins with the grantees' staff and other participants. The first check-in occurred six months after the grant was awarded. The final check-in occurred in

October 2002 when the Valuing Diversity Project concluded.[1] The check-ins were conducted by telephone by an independent ASDC staff person who had not involved in providing technical assistance or other support to the two grantees. During the semiannual check-in, the evaluator interviewed the grantees' primary staff persons and the local facilitators. During the annual and final check-in, the evaluator interviewed the following categories of participants in each of the grantee organizations: the primary staff person, the local facilitator, a senior staff person, a board member, and two advisory/steering committee members. The interview protocol is included in Appendix A.

Slavic Village Development (SVD)

Overview. The rapidly changing demographics of the Broadway/Slavic Village neighborhood prompted SVD to take a more proactive stance in ensuring that residents valued their neighborhood's diversity. The 1990 Census revealed that 90 percent of the 30,000 people living in the community characterized themselves as European American, compared to 67 percent in the 2000 Census. The African American population more than doubled during that time period. The sudden change in demographics contributed to increased tension in the neighborhood among residents of European and African descent. SVD organizers also noticed that many of the 35 block clubs throughout the neighborhood were not representative of the diversity within the neighborhood. These clubs tended to be either mostly African American or mostly European American, but they rarely had members from both racial groups. SVD's hope was to not only have more integrated block clubs, but also to create a neighborhood where residents realized the benefits of their community's diversity.

SVD formed a steering committee consisting of an intergenerational and diverse group of dedicated stakeholders. The committee named themselves the Bringing Broadway Together Advisory Committee and named the project "Broadway: Diversity in Progress." Steering committee were selected on the following basis:

- Commitment to valuing diversity and to working with others different from themselves;
- Willingness to devote time to the project;
- Access to a constituency in the neighborhood; and
- Ability to articulate the project's vision as well as engage others.

There were approximately 30 members in the steering committee, including eight youth.

Project outcomes. According to the project staff (including the local facilitator) and selected members of the steering committee, the project had a "significant" impact on committee members and the community at large. The steering committee identified the following five objectives to guide their work:

- Creating a new identity for the community;
- Forming new relationships across race, gender and age;

[1] At the end of October 2002 when this report was written, the grantees' projects were still going on, but at a reduced scale. Both grantees reported their intent to find funding sources and other ways to sustain the valuing diversity work they had started through this project.

- Developing both long- and short-term action steps;
- Developing a new way of organizing the community that included a more proactive approach to ensure the participation of diverse members in community activities and processes; and
- Determining a new way of responding to racial incidents in the neighborhood.

Creating a new identity for community. The steering committee conducted a series of Appreciative Inquiry (AI) interviews. AI is a four-stage process of discovery, dream, design, and destiny that is intended to create a new social construction which will help individuals envision a new and improved future.[2] SVD selected this approach because "AI asks positive questions about, in this case, comfortable diverse relationships that work in their neighborhood, which then generates new images of the future that the community can build upon." Other community organizing strategies were rejected based on their reinforcement of a community's negative identity. The steering committee was attracted to AI's emphasis on positive relationships and assets within the community.

Interviews were initially conducted among steering committee members and then expanded to other groups in the neighborhood. By following a structured interview protocol, participants were paired up to talk to each other about positive experiences or relationships they had with someone different from themselves, whether it be on the basis of race, age, gender, or socio-economic status.

The information compiled from the AI interviews gave rise to six themes that characterized the community in a positive light. The project staff called these themes "promising principles" that serve as "positive threads" carried throughout community. They include:

- *Confronting crisis*: Members of the community working together to enhance harmony;
- *The kids get it*: Emphasizing that the youth are the future;
- *Personal relationships*: Personal relationships help to overcome stereotypes;
- *People helping people*: People helping people builds strong relationships;
- *Breaking stereotypes*: Learning from each other also helps to break stereotypes; and
- *Leadership*: Leadership helps to create a positive force for change.

These promising principles were promoted in the community through brochures and newspaper advertisements about Broadway: Diversity in Progress in order to help shift the neighborhood's identity from negative to positive.

Another step taken in changing the identity of community was the modification of the neighborhood's name from just Slaving Village to Broadway/Slavic Village. The former alone "creates a stigma that this is a Slavic community and not one composed of diverse people," according to project staff. A series of advertisements and articles was published in both the Slavic Village Weekly Neighborhood Newspaper and the Neighborhood News, two major community newspapers. The advertisements emphasized comfortable diverse relationships formed between neighborhood residents. (See Appendix B for copies of the articles and advertisements). Articles submitted to the Neighborhood News addressed the residents' reactions to racial tensions in the community, highlighting the need to value diversity.

[2] Chupp, M. (Winter 2002). From culture wars to cultural harmony. *MCS Conciliation Quarterly*, pp. 4-5.

The annual neighborhood summit in May 2002 provided another opportunity for promoting the new identity. A display board, table tents, and brochures about Broadway: Diversity in Progress were exhibited and distributed at the summit. A presentation about the project was also conducted by the local facilitator. (See Appendix C for examples of these materials.) According to the project staff, the summit attracted a higher number of African American residents than in the past, possibly due to the project's effort to engage this community.

Formation of new relationships. According to steering committee members and the project staff, very "strong" relationships have been formed among community members across race, age, and gender lines. Four individuals of different race, age, and income level have developed and strengthened their relationships by participating in the project. These individuals—two African American women, an African American youth, and a European American middle-income man—serve as co-chairs for the project's steering committee and continue to work together to value their community's diversity.

There has also been a change in the attitudes of some committee members. Some older members of the committee have become more open in understanding the views of the youth members. In one case, an older member who once had a very negative attitude toward youth, showed his support for a particular teen by throwing a mini birthday party for her. Although this surprised some of the SVD's community organizers, the gesture demonstrated to them that relationships were in fact being formed as a result of the project. There was also an instance where a resident of a middle class neighborhood, through the project, forged a relationship with a resident from an adjacent working class neighborhood. Since then, they have started to attend each other's block club meetings. Both block clubs will be sponsoring a joint garage sale.

Eight seniors from a community senior center and nine teenagers formed relationships through the AI interview process as well. Both groups went through separate sensitivity training sessions before conducting the interviews. This training gave the seniors insight into the issues facing teenagers and vice versa. After completing these training sessions, the groups came together to conduct AI interviews. The project staff believed that this had a remarkable impact on both teenagers and seniors. The two groups have started to conduct joint social events on a more frequent basis. They also submitted a proposal to fund such intergenerational work in other parts of the neighborhood.

Development of action steps. The steering committee implemented a number of action steps to meet long- and short-term goals for the neighborhood. An example of an action step is the Welcome Wagon initiative. This included greeting new neighbors when they moved in, often with house warming gifts, and providing them with information on block clubs, city ordinances, youth curfew hours, and so forth. The new neighbor during this informal orientation would also be made aware that their neighborhood is one that values diversity.

The committee implemented a strategic publicity initiative to publicize their work throughout the neighborhood. They designed a *Broadway: Diversity in Progress* logo and, as mentioned previously, submitted articles and advertisements to local newspapers.

Future action steps include a community mural and porch nights where neighbors on a street with odd numbers designate a day where they sit out on their porch to be visited by those with even numbered houses and vice versa.

Developing a new way of organizing the community. SVD community organizers are continuing to evaluate ways to improve their organizing strategies, but they asserted that significant changes have been made since the implementation of Broadway: Diversity in Progress. For instance, they changed from a problem-oriented approach to an asset-based approach of organizing. This means that instead of mainly focusing on the community's problems, they now spend a significant time focusing on its assets, one such asset being their diversity.

The organizing staff has begun to take initiative in ways they had not before. They were pushed by ASDC to be more intentional in approaching issues of diversity. As a result, they are now more intentional about diversifying racially homogeneous block clubs by reaching out to residents of other races and encouraging them to be more active in their block clubs. The project staff believe that these efforts are working because block clubs that were once predominantly homogenous are slowly becoming more diverse. The project staff also reported a change in block clubs that had a history of racial tension. As leaders of these clubs became involved with the steering committee, the racial tension in their block clubs appeared to decline.

Another example signifying a change in SVD's organizing approach includes "stepping out of their comfort zone" by engaging racially diverse institutions that they had not previously worked with. These institutions included schools, faith institutions, recreation centers, and public libraries. The SVD board has embraced this change in organizing. Understanding that valuing diversity is of utmost importance, the SVD board has been very supportive of this new form of organizing.

Implementing a new way of responding to racial incidents in the neighborhood. To combat various racially motivated incidents occurring in the community, members of the steering committee, the local facilitator, and a community organizer engages in what they refer to as "interventions." These interventions developed after the steering committee expressed their concerns about a racial incident that occurred in the community during the last six months. During the discussion, they decided to form an ad hoc group, which included the Slavic Village lead organizer and the local facilitator, to talk to the victims and perpetrators of the first incident and help manage the conflict. Before meeting with the parties involved in the incident, the ad hoc group members devised a plan of action (e.g., how to request the meeting, who would participate, how to approach the issue). This initial step became a formalized strategy for addressing any such incidents that would arise in the community.

According to the project staff, they have conducted three interventions to date and in all cases they believe that residents left feeling hopeful about resolving the conflict or preventing such conflicts in the future. The residents left with valuable information pertinent to improving their situation in the future and felt that action was possible to prevent such future conflicts.

In one case, an intervention was done after an alleged case of police brutality against African American teens. While breaking up a physical fight between a group of European Americans and African American, the police was said to have exerted extra force when restraining the African American teens. Residents responded to this very negatively. The intervention team stepped in to provide support to their block club by helping them deal with the negative media and by providing support for the families of the teenagers.

In another case, a European American man had asked his African American neighbor to turn the music down, but did so using racial slurs and sexist language. The African American family being enraged proceeded to attack the man, causing him to lose an eye. In this case, the intervention team provided support to the victim's (European American man) wife and elderly mother by allowing her to talk about the impact the incident had on their family.

The third intervention occurred after a European American young man was killed by an African American. The European American drove through the neighborhood shouting racial slurs at African American residents threatening to obliterate them from the neighborhood. Being angered by these words, a young African American male shot and killed the European American man. The intervention team spent many hours trying to console the families of both men as well as the community at large. They highlighted ways in which the community could talk about their problems, as well as emphasized that such behavior did not shed a positive light on the community.

ASDC's support. In addition to reviewing SVD's project and learning plan, ASDC provided the following technical assistance to SVD:

- A site visit within two months after the grant approval to build relationships, help SVD plan their project, and address any outstanding questions and concerns;
- Recommendation of recruitment strategies to help SVD identify and engage institutional leaders, particularly from the African American community;
- Identification of promising strategies that could further inform SVD's Valuing Diversity Project;
- Coordination of exchange between SVD and two community organizations in other parts of the country that were conducting similar valuing diversity projects as SVD;
- Follow up with SVD's local facilitator and staff to address concerns and challenges.

SVD appreciated the level of dialogue that occurred between them and ASDC. Based on ASDC's suggestion, SVD reached out beyond block clubs to institutions they had not worked with in the past, particularly those that were predominantly African American or served also the African American community (e.g., churches, schools, public libraries, and local businesses). They found this to be an invaluable suggestion. They reported that they were "pushed beyond their comfort zone" by ASDC in this regard.

With regards to the challenges they experienced with support, SVD believed that the ASDC staff did their site visit too early in the process. They would have preferred if the visit took place when the program was more developed because then, they would have been able to ask the "right" questions in order to maximize the staff's on-site assistance.

ASDC also recommended that SVD contact two other community organizations to get insight into how they could formulate their own project. However, the SVD staff did not find this to be beneficial because they believed that these other programs occurred in communities that had different demographics and were at a different stage of valuing their diversity. Lastly, being in the process of seeking funding, SVD would have liked ASDC to help with this venture.

Lessons learned and challenges. The project led to a number of unexpected outcomes for SVD. Members of the committee and project staff all emphasized that the main unexpected outcome was the formation of so many strong relationships among committee members across groups. In one individual's words, " the sense of camaraderie among steering committee members were stronger than the sense of camaraderie they ever seen in block clubs." The steering committee's commitment to the project demonstrated to the SVD staff that organizing institutional leaders around a common vision is not only possible, but also effective.

The AI interview process facilitated an environment where participants were able to engage in dialogue about things that were important to them. This allowed them to develop a sense of trust that was particularly instrumental when dealing with issues of race. Project staff and committee members quickly realized that dealing with issues of race is a very difficult task; however, this did not hinder their work in the community. They understood the importance of speaking openly about racial issues as an integral step in highlighting the importance of valuing diversity within the community. The project staff believed that this understanding and basic capacity would not have been developed if not for the valuing diversity project.

Future plans. Sustainability is of course a priority for the SVD staff as well as the steering committee. Although it has been in effect for the past year and a half, the project is still in its infancy stage and they hope to develop it to the fullest potential. The committee members are hoping to implement a number of activities and programs, including the community mural and porch nights. However, for these activities to come to fruition, there needs to be significant funding. SVD is looking into various fundraising strategies.

To carry on the ideals of the project, the members of the committee hope to reach out to the youth in the community. They hope that the young people will pass on what they learned from the project to their peers.

TAMPU

TAMPU, being concerned with the depiction of minorities in the media, decided to focus their valuing diversity project on "The Media's Treatment of People of Color." Efforts were focused on the news and local programming. They had conversations with community and executives of media institutions and invited them to participate in an advisory committee. The committee consisted of a three members of TAMPU's board, eight representatives from both print and electronic media (WPEC News 12, WPBF TV 25, WPTV News Channel 5, and The Palm Beach Post), grassroots community leaders (including representatives from the Jamaican, Mexican, Guatemalan, Asian, Haitian, and African American communities), as well as a student from the Florida Atlantic University.

Project outcomes. TAMPU's project director, who also served as the local facilitator, and board members decided that it would be a two-way educational process, in that the community would try to understand the workings of the media, and the media would try to understand the different cultures in the community. They refrained from attacking the media as their intention was not to address them in a negative manner. Instead they approached the media from a "We do not understand" standpoint. To guide their work, they formulated several questions to be addressed.

- *Why do we have this perception that we are portrayed unfavorably by the media?*
- *Who decides what stories to cover?*
- *Who decides what airs on TV?*
- *Who gets called to give input on stories?*
- *How are the stories edited?*
- *How are the stories written?*
- *Who decides where stories are placed?*
- *How are decisions made on photo placement?*
- *What encompasses a 30 minute news show?*
- *Who works in the newsroom? At the paper? What do they do?*
- *How is the staff trained about different racial and ethnic groups?*

In order to prevent a confrontation between media representatives and community leaders and instead, create a supportive environment for both parties to work together, separate meetings for media representatives and community leaders were conducted before any joint meetings. The purpose of these separate meetings was to find out the concerns of each group and to use the information to design the subsequent joint meetings. A total of six joint meetings were conducted over a period of six months.

Building relationships by breaking stereotypes. An assumption that guided the design of the joint meetings was that an individual's feelings about other cultures are based on one's thoughts. These thoughts, which are sometimes misconceptions, can lead to negative feelings about those who belong to other cultural groups. In order to change such negative feelings one has to change what they think. During the group meetings, the facilitator devised various sharing activities in order to build relationships and to allow each participant to gain insights into each other's culture. These exercises not only helped to break down stereotypes, but also provided an opportunity for the participants to see how much they had in common with one another.

Redefining each other's roles in the news development. The group only began meeting six months ago, therefore, they are unable to determine the impact of their work on the community. However, they have noticed significant changes in how the media portrays minority groups. One aim was for the media to use minorities as experts in stories rather than only using them during times when they may have committed crimes. Media representatives understanding this, began contacting TAMPU to get the names of people they could interview for positive stories (e.g., depiction of positive and supportive relations between African American parents and their children). This was an unexpected outcome, but one that was fully embraced by the TAMPU staff.

The community leaders also gained insights into how the media finds and puts together stories. One of the meetings was held at The Palm Beach Post's office where community leaders worked together to design a front page story and had the opportunity to hear from a newspaper editor about how stories are selected.

The valuing diversity project appeared to have a larger impact on the media representatives than the community leaders, based on the changes that were reported by the staff and other participants. For example, a Latino resident was recently reported to commit an act that was perceived as negative by the media, but both print and electronic media representatives reported that they made a conscious effort not to make assumptions about the Latino community as a whole and made it clear that this one act was not representative of all Latinos. This was partially credited to the relationships that were developed between Latino community leaders and the media representatives through the meetings.

A television network hired three people of color to be on-air reporters. Channel 25 hired a Haitian woman they met through the valuing diversity project. Channel 25 has also established a diversity committee within the newsroom. A media representative who participated in the project spearheaded this committee. She noted that she did this based on what she learned from the project. This committee allows her to include a more sensitive and appropriate perspective about diversity issues into the newsroom.

ASDC's support. In addition to reviewing TAMPU's project and learning plan, ASDC provided the following technical assistance to TAMPU:

- A site visit within four months after the grant approval[3] to build relationships, help TAMPU plan their project, and address any outstanding concerns and questions;
- Identification of a consultant to assist the local facilitator during the first joint meeting between community leaders and media representatives;
- Identification of promising strategies that could inform TAMPU's valuing diversity work;
- Coordination of exchange between TAMPU and an organization in Albany, Georgia, that had implemented a similar project to improve the portrayal of African Americans in the local media;
- Review of plans and agendas for TAMPU's monthly meetings with community leaders and representatives.

Overall, TAMPU found ASDC's support to be invaluable, particularly in the initial stages. ASDC's structured requirements proved instrumental in getting the project up and running. ASDC also referred them to a similar program in Albany, Georgia that was very helpful to them. TAMPU staff reported that the relationship between ASDC and their organization felt more like a partnership than a grantee-grantor relationship. TAMPU had no recommendations with regards to improving the support.

Lessons learned and challenges. Participants reported that they learned a lot throughout the process. Although the project had helped to implement changes in how people of color were viewed in the media, there is still the concern that there are people in the community who do not

[3] The site visit to TAMPU was delayed until an executive director for the organization was hired.

view the misrepresentation as a significant issue. TAMPU hoped that more community leaders would become actively involved in working toward systems change.

By gaining a better insight into the workings of the media, members of the group also learned that it is a very fast paced and competitive business. Although some media institutions would like to be more inclusive, time constrains often hindered this. They saw this firsthand when one television station allowed members of the advisory group to tour the newsroom and allowed them to sit in on the meeting where the news for the day was determined. They also began to understand how the competitive nature of the business often leads to the sensationalizing of certain stories.

The main challenge for the project was maintaining consistent attendance. Although some of the community leaders found it to be a worthwhile venture, it competed with their busy schedules. Members of the media were, however, consistently present even though it was difficult for some of them to be away from the newsroom for two and a half-hours. However, it was a sacrifice they were willing to make given the importance of the issue.

Future plans. The advisory group has a meeting scheduled on November 1, 2002, to discuss possible ways to sustain the valuing diversity project. One possibility is to develop a media advisory committee that would meet on a quarterly basis and serve as a permanent body for monitoring the portrayal of minorities in the media. In addition to reaching out to more groups, some of the advisory group members also hope to engage high school and college students in their effort because they feel that it is imperative to begin nurturing the leaders of the future (i.e., young people) to be able to address issues related to social justice.

2.3 Identification of Promising Strategies and Resources for Valuing Diversity

Promising Strategies for Valuing Diversity

Purpose. Identification of promising strategies served two purposes:

- For use by APA members and other communities that may be interested in valuing their communities' diversity; and
- For identifying organizations that could be "peer" resources to SVD and TAMPU because they shared similar characteristics and conditions.

Criteria. A strategy was considered "promising" if it met the following criteria:

- Focused on increasing diversity within one or more of the following areas: sexual orientation, race, disability, and gender;
- Impacted more than one group and affected multiple settings;
- Based in a community defined by geographic boundaries (e.g., neighborhood, small city or town, county, city/urban area, or region);
- Demonstrated some evidence of success;
- Integrated into the infrastructure of the organization, institution, agency, or group that was responsible for its implementation;

- Adhered to the Working Group's definition of a community that values diversity (see Section 1.1).

The criteria and examples of strategies that meet each criterion are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Criteria for Promising Strategy

Criterion	Examples
The community's promising strategy or strategies must focus on increasing diversity within at least one of the following areas: Sexual orientation, Race (color, ethnicity, culture), Disability, Gender	• Increase representation of a group that has one or more of these characteristics in an organization, a planning process, or in decisionmaking. • Increase awareness in a community of such groups • Promote strengths of any of these groups
The strategy or program that values diversity must be a community-wide strategy or program that impacts more than one group and affects multiple settings	• Strengthen relationships between two groups in the workplace • Increase representation of people of color in the media and businesses • Create a community or regional task force for addressing inequities experienced by people of color • Builds understanding and includes people with disabilities in community planning, programs, and policies
The strategy or program must be based in a community defined by specific geographic boundaries (e.g., neighborhood, small city or town, county, city/urban area, region)	• If it is a national effort, the strategy or program to be included must be one that focuses on a local area (i.e., a local affiliate)
The strategy or program must have demonstrated some evidence of success or been part of an evaluation	• Increased individual awareness, which led to visible changes in an organization or a community (e.g., a physical sculpture, declaration of a day for recognizing a group) • Increased participation or representation in an organization or a process • A policy change for equal treatment

Criterion	Examples
Diversity must be integrated into the infrastructure of the organization, institution, agency, or group that is implementing the promising strategy or strategies	• Policy change • Improvements in the way the group typically conducts business • Boards and other committees reflect community's demographics
The strategy or program must adhere to the working group's definition of a community that values diversity.	• Continuously and effectively address racism, sexism, homophobia, and other forms of oppression • Develop and implement strategies that publicly recognize the cultural traditions and practices of every major group • Support processes that allow each group to address their own priorities, while at the same time, help the different groups find common ground to address shared concerns • Understand the dynamics between a group's characteristics and issues related to power, privilege, and oppression and know how to integrate the knowledge into its valuing diversity strategies.

Search and selection process. There were three phases to the search process. During phase 1, based on the Working Group and ASDC's knowledge, an on-line search and a review of the promising practices for racial reconciliation by former President Clinton's Initiative on Race, all possible groups working in the four diversity areas were identified. This phase generated a list of 83 organizations that had diversity as part of their mission statement, goals, or activities.

At the same time, ASDC distributed an announcement through various listserves (e.g., the National Community Building Network, the Community Foundations/Intergroup Relations Program, COMM-ORG, Community Development Society, and SCRA) asking for nominations (self and otherwise) of promising strategies. This announcement led to four self-nominations.

During phase 2, the list was screened to exclude organizations that focused on a geographic area larger than a region (e.g., two or more states), targeted individuals in a specific program or setting only (e.g., university or government agency), did not have explicit and clearly articulated goals and methods for valuing diversity, or were not directly involved in the implementation of the valuing diversity strategy (e.g., provided training, developed curricula, and conducted needs assessments only). This decision was made based on information available about the organizations from the internet and other materials (e.g., brochures, reports). If there was any uncertainty about the information, ASDC contacted the organization. During this phase, ASDC also contacted technical assistance providers and funders that supported racial and ethnic diversity efforts to obtain their recommendations of promising strategies. A final list of 42 organizations to be further explored by ASDC was developed.

During phase 3, ASDC interviewed the 42 organizations that were identified in the previous phase. A letter was faxed or mailed to the organizations. ASDC followed up with a telephone call to answer any questions that the organizations had and to schedule a telephone interview with the appropriate representative. Of these organizations, 22 organizations and their valuing diversity strategies (including the four self-nominations) met the criteria described above and were included in the database. Eleven organizations did not meet the criteria after further discussion with the representatives and nine organizations were not responsive to ASDC's repeated written and verbal requests. The final database, which is searchable by different criteria (e.g., type of diversity, geographic area, amount of resources for implementing the strategy), will be available to the public via the APA Public Interest Directorate web site (http://www.apa.org/pi/) by November 2002. An example of a promising strategy included in the database is provided in Appendix D.

Resources for Valuing Diversity

ASDC identified and collected information and resource materials (e.g., curricula, handbooks, brochures) related to promoting diversity, improving intergroup relations, addressing racism, and other issues pertinent to valuing diversity. Suggestions were also solicited from the Working Group and cadre of experts. A total of 63 resources were entered a database that will be available to the public via the APA Public Interest Directorate web site by November 2002.

The resources were categorized into the following areas:

- Tools (e.g., assessment tool for community inclusiveness);
- Community projects (e.g., report on community projects that valued diversity and their lessons learned);
- Empirical studies (e.g., studies of practical experiences related to valuing diversity);
- Theoretical studies (e.g., theories related to diversity, intergroup relations, etc.);
- Technical assistance resources (e.g., organizations that provide assistance to community groups that want to value diversity);
- Weblinks (e.g., on-line resources); and
- General (e.g., secondary research findings on strengthening diverse communities).

Guide to Selecting Valuing Diversity Strategies

Based on the knowledge generated through the search for promising strategies and the resources collected, ASDC developed a list of questions for communities to consider when they have decided that they would like to value their diversity and are ready to select valuing diversity strategies that best fit their context, capacity, and goals (see Appendix E). This list of questions builds on the principles (see Section 2.1) and the criteria for promising strategies.

2.4 Engagement of Professional Psychology

There were two opportunities to engage the larger community of psychologists in the Valuing Diversity Project:

- Presentation of promising strategy awards during the SCRA social hour at the APA 2002 annual convention; and
- A symposium on the project at the same convention.

Presentation of Promising Strategy Awardees

As an incentive to recruit participation in the search for promising practices and to increase visibility of successful community efforts, an award was promised to the organization considered to be an outstanding example for other organizations that want to strengthen their community by valuing its diversity and promoting racial justice. ASDC staff reviewed the 22 promising strategies and selected five finalists to be reviewed by the Working Group for an award from BAPPI and SCRA. The Working Group, using the valuing diversity definition, components of a promising strategy, and principles for valuing diversity as the criteria, selected the following two awardees:

- *The YWCA of Tucson's Racial Justice Program in Tucson, Arizona,* which understands that real change occurs over time with continuous dialogue and strategic planning and action involving community leaders, political officials, members of faith communities, educators, students, parents, and all individuals. With this in mind, the YWCA created the Racial Justice Program in 1998 which includes The Leadership Registry, Unlearning Racism Community Education Program, Anti-Racism and Diversity Resource Directory, and It's Time to Talk Forums on Race. Through these activities, the YWCA has been able to increase the number of persons of color on boards and commissions in Tucson from 12 to over 100. A total of 7,300 people have participated in some aspect of the Racial Justice Program.

- *The Maplewood/South Orange Community Coalition on Race*, which was formed in 1996 in New Jersey, understands that there will be no true racial harmony until people live together. It focuses on the balance of housing demand to maintain an integrated community. The Coalition has a loan program for homebuyers, which is designed to encourage and improve neighborhood diversity in particular areas where one race is underrepresented. It also conducts public forums and a study circle to raise the residents' awareness and appreciation for their community's diversity. The Coalition has succeeded in increasing European American homeownership in the eastern sections of the community that were previously dominated by African Americans. They also worked with the school district to "reinvent" a school to become a "Lab school", which has attracted a more diverse student population and homeowners in the neighborhood around the school.

The awards were presented to the two organizations at APA's 2002 annual convention in Chicago, Illinois.

A Symposium on the Valuing Diversity Project

ASDC, with assistance from the Valuing Diversity Project's Working Group, organized a symposium at the APA's 2002 annual convention. The symposium participants included: Barbara Cheives (project director and local facilitator from TAMPU), Kara Keating (lead organizer from SVD), and Kien Lee (ASDC) as primary presenters, and Thom Moore (University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana) and Meg Bond (University of Massachusetts in Lowell) as discussants. Melvin Wilson, President of SCRA served as the symposium chairperson. Drs. Bond and Wilson also served on the project's Working Group.

Ms. Cheives from TAMPU and Ms. Keating from the SVD described their activities, outcomes, and lessons learned. Kien Lee presented on the lessons learned about providing technical assistance to these two organizations. (These lessons are included in Section 3.) Drs. Moore and Bond discussed the following issues:

- "Intentionality"—the intention of the two organizations (TAMPU and SVD) to build community by valuing its diversity, to organize across race and cultures, and to give voice to marginalized groups;
- Need to understand and analyze the advantages and disadvantages of valuing diversity by an organization and a community;
- Dynamic tensions that are context driven (e.g., multiple realities versus a dominant reality; valuing similarities versus bridging differences; creating partnerships that are equal versus recognizing privileges and power differences); and
- Balance between personal, community, and institutional change.

3. SUMMARY OF LESSONS LEARNED

3.1 Lessons Learned by SVD and TAMPU

It takes time and a concerted effort by community members to ensure that diversity is valued within a community

A community valuing diversity is one where members understand the benefits of diversity. SVD and TAMPU both realized that this did not occur overnight. It took a concerted effort on the parts of all community members to ensure that diversity is seen in a positive light. Although all members of the community were not up to par with this notion of valuing diversity, both organizations realized that there are many people in their communities who are willing to build relationships and work together.

Developing a sense of trust from the start of the project is vital

SVD and TAMPU also realized that bringing diverse groups together to speak about race was not an easy venture. It required stepping out of their comfort zone to address serious issues.

However, once people develop a sense of trust and started talking, the conversations became much easier.

3.2 Lessons Learned by ASDC

Lessons learned about assisting communities

ASDC learned the following lessons about assisting communities in their adoption and adaptation of valuing diversity strategies:

- The technical assistance provider (in this case, ASDC) and recipients of the assistance (in this case, SVD and TAMPU) have to be prepared to engage in a certain degree of conflict that is inherent in any social change process;
- There are different philosophical orientations to valuing diversity, from dialogues to conflict transformation, and limited tools for helping communities value diversity. The technical assistance provider also has to be prepared to challenge the applicability of such strategies in the receiving communities;
- The use of a local facilitator who understands the community is essential and effective as long as there are clear expectations about roles, responsibilities, and reporting requirements;
- Multi-year funding is necessary to support the valuing diversity process, even though SVD and TAMPU were able to achieve many accomplishments in a short period of time;
- More frequent and continuous on-site technical assistance is essential;
- The valuing diversity strategy and its impact are more likely to be sustainable if a local funder or matching local funds is identified early on in the process.

Lessons learned about valuing diversity

Based on the information gathered during the identification of promising strategies and resources as well as from SVD and TAMPU, ASDC learned the following lessons about valuing diversity:

- A common important issue, whether or not it is directly related to diversity, is essential for bringing different groups together;
- Different levels of leadership, from grassroots to institutional, need to be engaged;
- Different groups need to be prepared to struggle for equal representation and power;
- A common language and understanding about what valuing diversity means is needed in order to help communities communicate their aspirations for inclusion and equality;
- Valuing diversity covers a continuum of activities and it was difficult for communities to identify and share tangible examples of efforts to promote and use the diversity as an asset that aren't focused on anti-racism, hate crimes, homophobia, etc.;
- There is no consensus among researchers and practitioners about what measures to use to determine a community or organization's capacity to value diversity; and
- Intermediaries are required to help communities adopt and adapt national and local resources to create and implement comprehensive strategies that are action-oriented and respond to local needs and context.

Lessons learned about engaging professional psychology in assisting communities

The process of engaging and working with psychologists to assist communities in addressing issues of diversity led to the following lessons by ASDC:

- Psychologists are more likely to be engaged in short-term tasks that are clear and structured; and
- Psychologists and community practitioners need to collaborate with each other in order to maximize the potential of their combined knowledge, generated through research and practice.

4. FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The Valuing Diversity Project is unique in the following ways, compared to other efforts to help communities value and manage their growing diversity:

- Facilitation of peer exchange and networking between communities that want to value diversity and those that have tried a similar effort and have insights to share;
- Connection between research and practice so that the strategies are informed by systematic analysis of information;
- Adoption and adaptation of promising strategies to the local context and needs of a community; and
- Availability of funds for program implementation and technical assistance for the participating communities.

Reports from SVD and TAMPU indicated that the above characteristics of the Valuing Diversity Project contributed to their projects' effectiveness to varying degrees. The Valuing Diversity Project reaffirmed the critical need for a process to help community organizations examine options for increasing the value of diversity in their communities. Community organizations typically do not have the knowledge or experience to be able to adopt and adapt the promising practice that best fits their context, resources, and capacity. The lessons learned from the Valuing Diversity Project are valuable to future efforts by APA, SCRA, and other organizations that are interested in strengthening communities by valuing their diversity.

ASDC is committed to continuing the project and will be exploring potential funding sources to do so. SCRA and the Public Interest Directorate have expressed their commitment to support ASDC and to continue engaging professional psychology to assist communities in addressing issues related to diversity.