

## **ST. LAWRENCE VALLEY EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION COUNCIL, INC. (WPBS) WPBS-TV DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY**

WPBS is committed to modeling diversity and inclusion and to maintaining an inclusive environment with equitable treatment for all. Our human capital is the most valuable asset we have. The collective sum of the individual differences, life experiences, knowledge, inventiveness, innovation, self-expression, unique capabilities and talent that our employees and board members invest in their work represents a significant part of not only our culture, but our reputation and station's achievements as well. We strive to create a workplace that reflect the communities we serve and where everyone feels empowered to bring their full, authentic selves to work.

At WPBS-TV a diverse, inclusive, and equitable workplace is one where all employees and volunteers, whatever their gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, family status, age, neurodiversity, sexual orientation or identity, veteran status, education or disability, feel welcomed, valued and respected. We are committed to a non-discriminatory approach, to providing equal opportunity for employment and advancement throughout our organization, and to ensuring our content offerings reflect the communities we serve. We respect and value diverse life experiences and heritages and ensure that all voices are valued and heard.

**Purpose of Policy:** It is the intent and goal of the Diversity & Inclusion Policy to:

- Cultivate a culture that encourages collaboration, flexibility, and fairness to enable individuals to contribute to their full potential.
- Value diversity, inclusion, and equity as connected to our mission and critical to ensure the well-being of our staff and the communities we serve.
- Acknowledge and dismantle any inequities within our policies, systems, programs, and services, and continually update and report organization progress.
- Explore potential underlying, unquestioned assumptions that interfere with inclusiveness.
- Advocate for and support board-level thinking about how systemic inequities impact our organization's work, and how best to address that in a way that is consistent with our mission.
- Practice and encourage transparent communication in all interactions.
- Commit time and resources to expand diversity within our board, staff, on-air talent and advisory bodies.
- Lead with respect and tolerance. We expect all employees to embrace this notion and to express it in workplace interactions and through everyday practices.
- Acquire and sustain a vital and effective workforce by making a commitment of management and resources to ensure that employees receive the training, developmental experiences, and tools to attain professional excellence and personal growth.
- Foster a culture that connects each employee to the organization, encourages collaboration, flexibility and fairness and leverages diversity throughout the organization so that all individuals are able to participate and contribute to their full potential.

**Diversity Goals and Initiatives:** WPBS-TV's goals, including its hiring goal, is to cultivate and preserve a culture of diversity and inclusion throughout the station, from its employees, boards and volunteers to its programming and community outreach initiatives. To achieve that goal, WPBS will annually plan and conduct specific initiatives that advance the Diversity & Inclusion Policy such as collaboration with other organizations committed to serving marginalized and underrepresented communities, and training to ensure equitable practices in hiring, promotion and evaluation.

WPBS-TV's diversity initiatives are applicable, but not limited to, our practices and policies on recruitment and selection of employees and board members; compensation and benefits; professional development and training; promotions; transfers; social and recreational programs; layoffs; terminations; and, the ongoing development of a work environment built on the premise of gender and diversity equity that encourages and enforces the following:

- Respectful communication and cooperation between all employees
- Respectful communication and cooperation between all board members
- Employer and employee contributions to the communities we serve to promote to a greater understanding and respect for diversity.

The goal is to attract, develop and retain the best talent from a variety of experiences and backgrounds and to provide a culture of inclusion where all individuals feel respected, are treated fairly and have the opportunity to excel.

To achieve this goal, it also requires all employees to do their part. Management must possess diversity and inclusion competencies to lead and manage an engaged workforce. All employees must treat their colleagues with respect by listening to different viewpoints, opinions, thoughts, and ideas and embracing a culture of inclusion.

### **Employment Policies and Expectations of Employees**

WPBS-TV's commitment to diversity is reflected in its employment policies. The station's employee handbook specifically includes an Equal Employment Opportunity Statement:

WPBS-TV is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We celebrate diversity and are committed to creating an inclusive environment for all employees. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, creed, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, national origin, disability (including the provision of reasonable accommodation), age, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, pregnancy, or related conditions (including breast feeding), or any other basis protected by law. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including but not limited to hiring, placement, promotions, terminations, layoff, recall, leaves of absence, compensation, and training.

WPBS-TV is committed to assuring equal employment opportunity and equal access to services, programs, and activities for individuals with disabilities. It is the policy of WPBS to provide reasonable accommodation to a qualified individual with a disability to enable such individual to perform the essential functions of the position for which he/she is applying or in which he/she is employed.

The policy applies to all employment practices and actions. It includes, but is not limited to, recruitment and selection, compensation and benefits, professional development and training, promotions, transfers, social and recreational programs, layoffs and terminations. Further, our work environment is built on the premise of diversity equity that encourages:

- Respectful communication and cooperation among all employees;
- Teamwork and employee participation, permitting the representation of all group's employees and perspectives.
- Work/life balance through flexible work schedules to accommodate employees' varying needs; and,
- Employer and employee contributions to the communities we serve to promote a greater understanding and respect for diversity.

All WPBS employees and board members have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect at all times. All employees are expected to exhibit conduct that reflects inclusion during work, at work functions on or off the work site, and at all other company sponsored and participative events. All employees are required to attend and complete annual diversity awareness training to enhance their knowledge to fulfill this responsibility.

Any employee found to have exhibited any inappropriate conduct or behavior against others may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Any board member found to have exhibited any inappropriate conduct against others may be subject to revocation from the board.

Employees who believe that they have been subjected to discrimination that conflicts with the station's diversity and inclusion policy should seek assistance from the Office & Human Resources Manager.

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