Leading Efforts that Embrace Equity

Moffitt Cancer Center has long championed efforts to address diversity, equity and inclusion - in our workforce, our interactions with the business community and, most importantly, our relationship with our patients.

“For me, diversity is all about creating an environment that looks like the community we serve,” said B. Lee Green, PhD, vice president, Diversity, Public Relations and Strategic Communications. “We embrace our differences and also celebrate them.”

The value and necessity of Moffitt’s efforts stand in stark contrast to a year of tumultuous events and protests against long-standing racial inequities in all aspects of society. “Our aim is to provide improved access to cancer care for all,” said L. David de la Parte, Esq., executive vice president, General Counsel. “And if we can make discoveries around the mechanics of cancer in a particular minority population resulting in cures or preventions associated with those findings, then those are huge contributions to leveling an un leveled playing field.”

Moffitt Diversity is leading the cancer center in enacting cohesive and unified efforts across the enterprise that embrace diversity, equity and inclusion as an essential business tool. We are striving to reflect the community Moffitt serves, reduce cancer disparities and meet the unique oncology needs in ways that are accessible, equitable and exceptionally personalized for all.

The team member and leadership demographic data represents all individuals employed by Moffitt Cancer Center during the reporting period FY2021 (7/1/20-6/30/21).
Language Services

COVID-19 COULD NOT STEAL OUR SMILE

During the COVID-19 pandemic we all had to make more than a few adjustments to stay safe and keep others safe. Getting used to only seeing half of people’s faces was one of them. Now imagine that you are deaf or hard of hearing, and you rely on facial expressions (or even lip reading) for understanding and communicating with others. In this scenario, a mask feels like an insurmountable barrier.

In American Sign Language, facial expressions convey both linguistic information and emotions. For example: raising your eyebrow indicates a question, and signers use their faces to express emotional content. During the pandemic, it has become imperative for hospitals to find other types of facial protective equipment that would also facilitate communication for these patients: clear window masks. These masks are FDA-approved and were cleared with our Infection Control department.

At Moffitt, we made these masks available to patients and staff from the beginning of the pandemic. As supplies stabilized, they became part of the general hospital inventory and can be ordered directly from General Stores in all clinical areas.

That can include patients going through chemotherapy. But the connection wasn’t made until a chance encounter with a Moffitt Cancer Center physician at a local farmer’s market where Samson was promoting her products. The two exchanged information, connecting Sampson with our Supplier Diversity Office. Canviiy ultimately secured a partnership with the cancer center in March 2018. One of Canviiy’s first partnerships, Sampson said it helped set her company on a path for international success.

Moffitt Cancer Center has reported approximately $157,734,746 in diversity spend over the last five years. These efforts have earned both regional and national recognition for the cancer center’s supplier diversity commitment and leadership accountability.

“We embrace our differences and also celebrate them.”

– Dr. B. Lee Green

Supplier Diversity

WORKING WITH A WIDE RANGE OF SUPPLIERS IS MORE THAN GOOD BUSINESS

Supplier Diversity’s impact is especially evident in construction of our new 10-story hospital on the McKinley East campus. The cancer center committed to a supplier diversity goal of 15% over the span of this project, or $52 million. As of June 2021, over 60% of that goal had been met. To date, over $9 million in contracts have been awarded to veteran-owned businesses, with more than $10 million in awarded contracts with women-owned businesses and nearly $6 million with African American and Hispanic American-owned businesses.

But Supplier Diversity’s efforts aren’t limited to construction. A line of hair care products found in Moffitt’s Magnolias Hair Salon is a case in point.

Sherrel Sampson launched her organic health and wellness brand Canviiy (pronounced kan-vē) in 2015 when she couldn’t find a suitable remedy for scalp irritation triggered by common styling processes. Formulated with help from an organic chemist, the line includes all-natural solutions that help revitalize, repair and nourish scalp and skin irritations.

“This is not a rare condition,” Sampson said. “Not only do women who have had extensions and color have these scalp conditions, so do others who simply have sensitive skin.”

Culturally Competent Care

EXPANDING DIET OPTIONS SUPPORTS CULTURALLY COMPETENT CARE

In addition to complex medical issues, clinicians must weigh a patients’ cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds in determining appropriate and individualized care plans. Earlier this year we noticed visitors bringing food to their hospitalized family member. We investigated further and learned that the patient had not been offered a medically approved diet in concordance with her religious beliefs. The Moffitt Diversity team identified this as an opportunity to improve delivery of culturally competent medical care.

We met with dietitians, clinical staff and the Sodexo cafeteria management team to identify possible solutions. Since patients often have medically restricted diets as part of their therapy, we wanted to coordinate the medical needs with the logistics of the care delivery. The team developed culturally appropriate menus that met the medical requirements for the patient’s recovery. The cafeteria management team then worked on food sourcing options from local and national vendors that are packaged in adherence with religious guidelines to ensure integrity.

Moffitt now offers patients a range of dietary options that meet specific medical and cultural needs. For example, clinicians have the option to order a kosher clear liquid diet for post-operative patients. Similar diets were arranged for other ethnic and religious backgrounds including Hindu vegetarian, halal and kosher meals. The dietary orders were incorporated into the existing order entry system, and education was offered to clinicians and staff.

This small initiative represents coordination of multiple cancer center team members from various departments to improve culturally competent care delivery.
Engaging Team Members

NETWORKS ORGANIZE AROUND SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF DIVERSITY

Last year’s protests against systemic racism were draining for many Black Americans, including Moffitt team members like Jason Grundy. “For me, it was hard to go to the office every day and to stay focused on work,” said Grundy, a manager in Moffitt’s financial offices. “I needed an outlet.” Grundy’s informal networking with other Black team members led to the Black Empowerment Alliance at Moffitt (BEAM).

For over a decade, team members have had the opportunity to create voluntary, employee-led groups called Team Member Engagement Networks (TMENs). The groups organize around targeted dimensions of diversity such as age, race, ethnicity or LGBTQ+ identity. Membership is not limited; allies and advocates are welcome. “We understand that when team members feel like they belong and are comfortable, they are going to be at their best,” said Cathy Grant, senior director of Moffitt Diversity. “These team members are also more inclined to provide thoughts and opinions on how to improve the cancer center and the experiences of our team members and patients.”

Research shows that employees with a voice in their organization are happier and more productive. With Moffitt’s increasingly diverse population, it makes sense the Diversity team would find a way to make those voices heard.

Two longstanding TMENs continue to grow. GenerationM focuses on young professionals. Unity@Moffitt provides an outlet for LGBTQ+ team members, its input helped establish Moffitt as a Leader in LGBTQ Healthcare per the Human Rights Foundation Campaign, a biannual distinction Moffitt has earned nine times.

With BEAM and new groups focused on Asian, Latinx and team members with disabilities in development, the program’s structure is evolving. All TMENs will come under the guidance of Executive Vice President/Chief Financial and Administrative Officer Yvette Tremonti and each group’s executive sponsor.

“I always want us to be on the forefront and to serve as an example,” Tremonti said. “The more of these networks we have the more representation we have for all team members in our organization. TMENs provide Moffitt team members with another resource and it’s a powerful one.”

Yvette Tremonti

Racial Equity Plan

2021 Retrospective

AN ACCELERATION OF EQUITY PROGRESS

While Moffitt Cancer Center’s commitment to equity has always been steadfast, efforts made in the wake of our country’s collective reckoning of persistent racial injustice have resulted in unprecedented progress in our pursuit of racial equity.

Progress is evident in how we as workers and caregivers speak about the impacts of race. Dialogue was sustained in every facet of the organization, and 3,218 team members participated in a series of all workforce Town Halls on the topic of advancing Racial Justice.

We shifted to data-driven diversity insights with the launch of the Workforce Diversity Dashboard, a real-time repository of workforce demographics. Trending and predictive analysis of our human capital by social identity characteristics enables more accurate recruitment, retention and advancement of team members.

In the wake of the murder of George Floyd, understanding how to support our team members, in particular those who identify as Black/African American, was a priority. A novel assessment on diversity, equity and inclusion, called the Me@Moffitt Survey provided over 7,300 unique comments revealing that while diversity is valued, opportunities exist to improve.

The building of communities with sustained focus on issues of importance to a demographic group is a vital area of progress. See the description of our new Team Member Engagement Networks (page 42).

With a focus on health disparities, Moffitt’s MRI and MMG faculty assembled for a retreat on diversity, equity and inclusion. Topics included community outreach efforts, minority recruitment into clinical trials, and the recruitment, mentoring and retention of diverse faculty.

The Moffitt Diversity team received approval to proceed with a new Impact 2028 Support Plan focused on Equity. The Enterprise Equity Support Plan was developed with input from leaders and team members from across the cancer center, representing diverse roles. Three lines of effort were identified in this process: “Enabling Unity of Effort,” “Reflecting the Community” and “Widening Moffitt’s Doors.” The Enterprise Equity Support Plan’s efforts will set the equity roadmap for the cancer center.

Despite these initiatives, we must remain even further committed to accelerating efforts to support equity and inclusion.

Yvette Tremonti

MOFFITT DIVERSITY 2021

By the Numbers

#3 DiversityInc

Hospital and Health System for Diversity in U.S.

5,098 Team members participating in Diversity, Equity & Inclusion education

$763,909 grant awarded to provide health equity training for care providers

62% of physicians are women and/or underrepresented minorities

16% of team members participate in engagement networks

6,631 Interpretation encounters with patients

72% of team members in leadership are women and/or underrepresented minorities

19 Training topics

88 Trainings provided

$763,909

Grant award to provide health equity training for care providers

DiversityInc