



## DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION (DEI) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To fulfill VPM's mission and vision, we must commit to and prioritize the work of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) across our organization. Beyond being a moral imperative, this is a business imperative to ensure VPM is a thriving public media organization that serves the evolving needs of our communities.

Over the past few years, we have been taking steps to produce more content that represents diverse people, places and perspectives, and to broaden the racial, age and gender demographics of our governing boards and advisory councils. The urgency and gravity of this work came into clearer view in 2020, starting with the murder of George Floyd. While Mr. Floyd is just one of countless Black Americans who have died at the hands of police in our nation's history, the fact that we watched the graphic 9 minutes and 29 seconds of his final moments on video forced a collective awakening about systemic inequalities and injustices experienced by Black Americans and ignited a nationwide movement aimed at examining our history, acknowledging our failures and creating a better future for all people.

At the same time, Americans were already grappling with fear, anxiety and uncertainty around the COVID-19 pandemic, which was disproportionately affecting communities of color and further highlighting inequities between the haves and have nots. During the pandemic, we also saw the rise of anti-Asian hate, culminating in the murder of eight people in Atlanta, including six Asian women.

Protests for racial equity and justice occurred across our communities and were even more profound in Richmond, a city that has wrestled with its complex history as one of the centers of the slave trade and the former capital of the Confederacy.

At VPM, this historic moment in our nation's quest for equity for all people led us to engage in purposeful introspection about our own DEI efforts and conversations about our role as public service media. To be successful, we must earn the trust and support of the communities we serve. To do that, people from Central Virginia and the Shenandoah Valley must see themselves in our content, which can only be achieved if our organization reflects the diversity of those communities.

In order to make meaningful change, DEI must be threaded through everything we do — the content we produce, the news we cover, the people who make up our staff, leadership, Boards and volunteers and in every aspect of our workplace. We must cultivate a true sense of belonging.

We understand that this work is ongoing and takes time, and we are committed to the journey so that we can fulfill our mission and vision and make a positive impact on the communities we serve. In order to make meaningful change, DEI must be threaded through everything we do — the content we produce, the news we cover, the people who make up our staff, leadership, Boards and volunteers and in every aspect of our workplace. We must cultivate a true sense of belonging. We understand that this work is ongoing and takes time, and we are committed to the journey so that we can fulfill our mission and vision and make a positive impact on the communities we serve.

## Our Journey

In June 2020, we began to develop a more intentional approach to DEI. This included surveying our staff to better understand their lived experiences and to identify the most critical issues to address.

We also engaged Todd Waldo at Hugh Helen, LLC to bring his expertise in DEI to help us define and execute a deliberate process to create VPM's DEI strategy and roadmap. The first step was to draft our DEI Intention in support of our mission, vision, values and strategic goals.

### Our DEI Intention states:

VPM will reflect the diverse communities we serve, which means we will:

- Ensure people in our community see themselves through the stories we tell;
- Provide equal opportunities for all employees; and
- Cultivate a workplace where our employees feel valued.

Once that intention was set, our leaders and teams worked through the rest of the fiscal year on identifying the tactics we needed to focus on in building a more diverse, equitable and inclusive company. We also threaded DEI through our strategic conversations about the priorities for FY 2022 to ensure we were allocating the resources needed to execute on our DEI tactics.

Beyond internal staff, we have relied on regular feedback from the VPM Media Corporation Board and the Community Advisory Boards representing Richmond, Charlottesville and the Shenandoah Valley. As representatives of our community, the boards and advisory councils are a critical resource for input and help keep us accountable to our DEI work.

## Defining Success

The VPM 2020 & Beyond Strategic Plan was crafted in 2019 and charts VPM's course for the next three years. It includes three corporate goals:

- Increase relevance: measured by brand awareness & community impact
- Increase total monthly audience by 25%
- Eliminate the gap between operating revenue and expenses

Our DEI work is foundational to achieving these goals. If we are successful, we will see an expanded audience and membership base across platforms, with an audience that mirrors our Nielsen Designated Market Area (DMA).

We should also have a workplace where employees are highly engaged and able to do their best work, as measured by an annual employee engagement survey and regular feedback between employees and managers.

To build a public media organization that everyone in our community can see themselves in will take time and constant review and evaluation. As a first step, we have created a year one roadmap of goals and action items to make VPM's DEI Intention real in our organization. This timeline creates accountability and a schedule for quarterly progress reports.

Moving forward, we will build on this roadmap and apply the lessons learned in year one as we draft future goals and actions.