

FUND FINANCE FRIDAY

Diversity in Fund Finance – Update and Committee Details

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The Diversity in Fund Finance group hosted its first virtual open happy hour session on Tuesday. After three years of primarily focusing on one of our goals – to educate and connect with students addressing the lack of a diverse pipeline in our industry – we were excited to kick off our efforts in building an affinity network to engage with the broader FFA community. About 30 members of various backgrounds attended, sharing feedback on things organizations are doing well, some changes that organizations are implementing, and things they would like to see happen. Here are some key takeaways from our session:

- **Tone at the top matters – a lot.** The group discussed that, for many of them, it was really important to hear messages of support for diverse colleagues from leadership in their organizations, particularly during the height of the Black Lives Matter protests. The group discussed that understanding and acknowledging that systemic racism affects individuals of each gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and more is a key first step.
- **Actions always speak louder than words.** While messages are important, starting to see steps for change is crucial. Evidence of actions and changes the group has seen include organizational donations, matching donations for colleagues, and changes to reviews of hiring and promotion practices.
- **More work needs to be done.** We all agreed that everyone needs to do their part to progress towards change. We shared a message from Melinda Epler's [TED talk](#) that everyone can be a better ally. "*There's no magic wand for correcting diversity and inclusion,*" Epler says. "*Change happens one person at a time, one act at a time, one word at a time.*"

We are thrilled that more people want to be involved in this group and are interested in more volunteer opportunities and panel discussions, including how this ties into a business perspective. We are holding an open committee meeting on Wednesday, November 11 at 12:30 p.m. EST. If you would like to be part of pushing our efforts forward, please join us and [register here](#). For more updates, please also register for our [mailing list](#) or reach out directly to [me](#), ANKaup@duanemorris.com and Nicki.Macgregor@cba.com.au.