

ABA's Antiracism, Equity, Inclusion, Access & Representation Work

2024

With thanks to the booksellers, bookstore owners, and ABA staff who serve on the ABA's Diversity Equity and Inclusion Council (DEIC) and who contributed to, and supported, many of these initiatives.

- Reviewed Winter Institute 2024 programming for equity, antiracism, and access issues and ideas during planning stages and implemented changes in support of those goals
- Worked with DEIC to inform antiracism training at Winter Institute 2024. DEIC members met with facilitators and helped shape priorities for the session.
- Offered antiracism training at Winter institute 2024 for bookstore and followed up with a virtual encore session for members
- Created Lunar New Year celebration for Winter Institute 2024 at the suggestion of a DEIC member and with her assistance and support from Macmillan
- Worked to present safer travel options/support for trans attendees of Winter Institute 2024
- Met with hotel and convention center staff ahead of Winter Institute 2024 and Children's Institute 2024 to discuss the importance of pronouns and the harm of misgendering guests
- Continued to offer a quiet room, lactation room, closed captioning for keynotes, funding for mobility devices, audio listening devices, accessibility "fast passes" for author signing and buffet lines, and smaller rep pick rooms at Winter Institute 2024 and Children's Institute 2024
- Hosted a dinner at Winter Institute 2024 for DEIC members and created an opportunity for DEIC members to meet members of the ABA Board.
- Acknowledged that Winter Institute 2024 in Cincinnati took place on land that is the traditional land of the Adena, Hopewell, Myaamia (Miami),

Shawandasse Tula (Shawanwaki/Shawnee), Wyandot, Delaware, Haudenosaunee, and Wazhazhe Manzhan (Osage) Peoples, and many other tribes due to its central location. Shared a land acknowledgement with attendees, donated to [The Native American Indian Center of Central Ohio's Land Back NAICCO](#), a movement to purchase Ohio land for Native community use and cultural restoration, and shared their video with attendees to promote the organization's important work.

- Acknowledged that Children's Institute 2024 took place on the traditional homelands of the Houma, Tunica-Biloxi, Choctaw, and Chitimacha peoples. Donated to the First People's Conservation and Council, an organization that works for the restoration of land, water and air of the First Peoples in the State of Louisiana; and shared a call to action in signing a petition for federal recognition of the Houma Nation.
- Created a resource guide with inclusion, equity, and access resources for Winter Institute 2024 and updated the resource guide for Children's Institute 2024 with input from the DEI Council to include more specific transit and public transportation information, tips for ensuring all attendees have a smooth check-in experience at the conference hotel, locally-sourced guides to shopping local, BIPOC-owned, and Queer-owned in New Orleans, and information on celebrating Pride while in New Orleans.
- Continued to advocate for racial representation in rep picks for Winter Institute 2024 and Children's Institute 2024 and made this a call to action during the publisher debrief
- Continued to ensure BIPOC representation amongst authors, panelists, and speakers at Winter Institute 2024 and Children's Institute 2024
- Continued in-person affinity group meet ups at Winter Institute 2024 and Children's Institute 2024 and added refreshments
- Provided QR codes at Institutes as a more accessible way to sign up for Virtual Affinity Groups while at Children's Institute
- Added "Building Diverse Children's Sections" session to conference schedule, providing additional opportunities for attendees to hear from publishers highlighting new titles from authors and characters from historically underrepresented groups

- Worked with Board members to reach out directly to Black booksellers for feedback & conversation ahead of Children's Institute
- Created new "DEI Resources at ABA" email that is delivered to all new member stores in their first month of membership
- Continued to waive membership dues for new BIPOC-owned stores
- Added dedicated pop-up meeting space at Winter Institute 2024 and Children's Institute 2024 for affinity group members to reserve as needed for additional intersectional and/or smaller group meetings
- Added new Black bookseller affinity group meet ups to Children's Institute 2024 and the virtual calendar (separate from the BIPOC meet ups) at the request of members
- Added an intersectional affinity group reception at Children's Institute 2024
- Invited Black-owned publishers recommended by members to Children's Institute 2024. Waived their fees and offered a scholarship.
- Brainstormed ideas to address rep pick concerns about representation raised at Winter Institute 2024. Brainstormed ideas with DEIC. Tested ideas at Children's Institute 2024.
- Held monthly virtual affinity meetups for the Black Community Affinity Group, BIPOC Affinity Group, LGBTQIA2S+ Affinity Group, Neurodiverse Community Affinity Group, Disability Community Affinity Group
- Held BIPOC member bi-annual forum to hear about the needs and experiences of BIPOC members
- Held LGBTQIA2S+ members bi-annual forum to hear about the needs and experiences of members of the LGBTQIA2S+ communities
- Ensured that all booksellers and bookstore owners from existing Black-owned bookstores in physical spaces (brick-and-mortar, mobile, & pop-up) who applied for Children's Institute 2024 scholarships received them
- Ensured BIPOC and LGBTQIA2S+ store representation on Winter Institute 2024 and Children's Institute 2024 bus tours
- Continued to center and support historically marginalized individuals and communities in ABA education offerings. (Several of these video recordings

can be found in the [Winter Institute 2024 archive](#) and are also on [ABA's BookED podcast](#).) For example:

- Keynote presentations with Michele Norris: Race. Your Thoughts. Six Words. Please Send.
- *Our Hidden Conversations* Debrief with Michele Norris
- Beyond Allyship: Supporting LGBTQIA2S+ Staff Members
- Featured Talk: Beyond the Binary
- Banned Books Preparedness
- Developing Deescalation Skills
- Anti-Racism in the Bookstore
- Emergency Drag Story Time Security
- Community Conversation on Recent Threats to Drag Events
- Analyzed Winter Institute 2024 demographic data and brainstormed ways to support and value Black and BIPOC booksellers at Institutes (and beyond). Reviewed Children's Institute 2024 programming for equity, antiracism, and access issues to address and ideas to implement
- Sent a survey to Black booksellers who did not register for Children's Institute 2024 asking about the obstacles to them attending, or wanting to attend, to help inform ABA's support efforts
- Continued to fight book bans that disproportionately impact authors of color and authors in the LGBTQIA2S+ community, and protected the right of all readers to see themselves reflected in books through the work of ABA's free expression initiative, American Booksellers for Free Expression (ABFE)
- Scheduled a Lightning Talk on Creating a Sensory-Friendly Store Environment with Robin Stern (Books, Inc.)
- Met with DEIC Members to discuss ideas for revitalizing/improving Affinity Groups to better meet the needs of members.
- Held two forums for Black booksellers w/ ABA CEO, COO, and CCO to hear about their needs and experiences
- Scheduled an interfaith prayer space for Children's Institute 2024 in response to attendee feedback at Winter Institute 2024, including specific needs of Muslim attendees.

- Updated Spanish Language Books guide to include more small press, independent, and international distributor listings
- Included racial representation in the annual publisher survey to support ABA's advocacy in support of more racial representation in publishing
- Prioritized racial representation for staffing, publishing, and marketing dollar spend on the agenda for the upcoming annual publisher meetings
- Conducted outreach to Black booksellers for publisher survey input to ensure that might be specific to Black bookstores and/or issues that might be disproportionately impacting Black bookstores with publishers are met. Outreach was conducted to ensure that we had as much feedback as possible from as diverse a group of members as possible.
- Conducted dedicated outreach to Black-owned bookstores in regard to membership renewal, barriers to membership, and member benefits.
- Contacted Black booksellers to honor and highlight planned Juneteenth celebrations.
- Donated to The Word: A Storytelling Sanctuary to help support their important work in support of historically marginalized voices and underserved communities. (If you can, please [support their work](#) too or [sign up for their newsletter!](#))
- Donated to Lambda Literary and supported a coalition partnership including a staff member who joined their board.
- Continued spaces for historically marginalized booksellers and owners to be recognized and celebrated in *Bookselling this Week*
- Promoted Matchbook Marketing's Black Voices print newsletter (available to booksellers for a nominal fee to cover paper and shipping only)
- Continued to promote and support the Advance Access program for Underrepresented Voices
- Hosted "Facilitating Banned & Diverse Book Donations" session