

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE ASSOCIATION DIVERSITY COMMITTEE STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2023

Goal 1: Planning for membership

Goal Statement: ChLA actively recruits members from a broad spectrum of professionals, valuing diversity and equity, as well as international partnerships and members new in their careers.

Strategic objectives:

A. Make the ChLA more visible to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), and Indigenous Colleges and Universities (ICUs).

Action item: Identify institutions, gathering information about faculty and curricula in children's literature and childhood studies at each institution, making contacts with faculty and graduate students.

A note of explanation: there are hundreds of two-year and four-year schools that fall under the HBCU, HSI, and ICU designations. A first step would be to create a list of *four-year* HBCUs, HSIs, and ICUs, and then to divide that list among the Committee members. (The "four year" stipulation is in place in order to emphasize schools that offer BA degrees in English, Education, Literary Studies, Cultural Studies, and Library Sciences.) Each member would be responsible for discerning the school's investment in children's literature (courses in the English, Education, and Library Sciences Departments) and investment in training teachers and librarians (Education and Library Science programs); this information is available through the web. We wish to create an initial list of eight to ten schools to pursue. **Goal for completion: January 2021.**

At the same time, the Committee will use the ChLA's listserv, and other social media to ask its membership about its knowledge of HBCUs, HSIs, and ICUs that are invested in children's literature. Goal for completion: January 2021.

Action item: Discern the best means to create relationships with HBCUs, HSIs, and ICUs with a goal of recruiting and retaining scholars.

Once we have the short list, we will then need to begin conversations within our Committee about how to create relationships with faculty members at those schools. This action item relates to discernment rather than creation of relationship.

The Diversity Committee has successfully sought funding from the ChLA Board for the June Cummins Diversity Travel Grant and will disseminate information about this grant to facilitate ChLA conference attendance and participation by scholars from diverse groups. Here's a link to the webpage with information about the grant: <https://www.childlitassn.org/june-cummins-diversity-conference-travel-grant>

Please be aware that developing relationships with HBCUs, HSIs, and ICUs is not a process that has a simple end-point. We hope to make this a continuing priority for our Committee.

B. Make the ChLA more visible to programs in Ethnic Studies at universities and colleges.

Action item: Research particular programs that have had an interest in Childhood Studies and children's literature, and develop contacts with faculty members. This would be a targeted recruiting effort.

Our outreach to Ethnic Studies programs will commence after we have begun in earnest on Action item A. We anticipate beginning this process in 2020, and will probably follow a procedure similar to our efforts with HBCUs, HSIs, and ICUs.

C. Reclaim relationships with scholars of color in English, Education and Library Sciences who have shown interest in ChLA in the past.

This is our third priority. We anticipate working with Jamie Reed and using the Committee listserv to generate ideas. We would also look through recent issues of *Children's Literature*, the *Quarterly*, *CCL*, and *Lion & the Unicorn*, *Research on Diversity in Youth Literature* among other journals, for publications on diversity issues, and discern authors' experience and potential interest in ChLA. We anticipate continuing this process in 2020.

D. Recruit and support graduate students who are working in areas related to diversity, equity, and childhood, and discern the means by which graduate students could become actively involved with the Diversity Committee.

We will launch two efforts; the most immediate effort will aim to expand Committee membership and participation. We will encourage graduate students to run for committees. We will also hold an "open meeting" of our Committee at the ChLA conference, in the interest of hearing graduate student concerns.

Action item: Generate greater student involvement in discussions on Committee issues (through the listserv and through open meetings, such as the Minority Breakfast at ChLA conferences).

The effort is long term. We will use our relationships with Ethnic Studies programs and with HBCUs, HSIs, and ICUs in order to recruit graduate students.

In the long term, we also hope to work with the Membership Committee to identify graduate students and junior scholars (with interests in diversity and equity issues) who are new to our organization. We would like to talk with the Membership Committee about revising the membership/dues form in order to include a "check list" of interests within our field (not limited to but including diversity issues). This "check list" would be modeled on the MLA's membership form, which allows scholars to join discussion groups based on sub-field. It would be helpful for the organization to allow members to self-identify; the organization could then discover how many of its members are interested in, say, fantasy or picture books, as well as enable the Diversity Committee (and other Committees) to recruit members and develop involvement.

- Publicize the ChLA to professional organizations concerned with scholarship on diversity in literature (such as the Association of Jewish Librarians, The Society for the Study of Multi-Ethnic Literature, and so on).

- Each year we will also generate nominations for elected Committee membership, drawn from suggestions from the listserv and membership at large. We will also each year organize our annual panel at the ChLA Conference.

Action item: Generate nominations for elected Committee membership and organize annual Diversity Committee panel at the ChLA Conference.

- This is an effort that will recur annually. Our goal in generating specific nominations for the Diversity Committee is to ensure that all diverse identities are represented (with particular interest in diversities outside of race and ethnicities).
- Additionally, we see the format of the sponsored panel shifting. While we are still interested in supporting the juried panel format, we would like to expand to round tables, fora and/or invited speakers.