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A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Here at WCS, our Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) create an opportunity to generate deeper employee interactions, cultivate a stronger sense of belonging, and generate new pathways to achieving our mission. Since inception, each of the five ERGs has advanced our commitment to creating greater diversity, equity, and inclusion both inside and outside our walls. We acknowledge that the diverse backgrounds, ethnicities, and life experiences of our community are the foundation of ERGs and provide a platform for employees to further express themselves. By collectively channeling the diverse viewpoints from these ERGs, we can create better outcomes to support our mission.

In this report, we share each ERG’s commitments and outcomes over the past eighteen months. The internal work has been led by our Chief Diversity Officer, Kevin Wells, and also represents the shared, invaluable efforts of our WCS senior leaders and colleagues, as we believe that DEI is an organizational commitment. We are extremely proud of the progress that has been made thus far and look forward to continuing to listen to and learn from our ERGs.

Robert G. Menzi
Executive Vice President &
Chief Operating Officer
A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICER

I am pleased to share WCS’s 2022/2023 Employee Resource Groups Report. This report documents that our colleagues welcomed and enthusiastically participated in five organization-sponsored Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) in the US, thereby furthering the implementation of our diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. Highlighted in the WCS report are the activities of each of our five ERGs and the successes those groups achieved in meeting this organization’s DEI goals.

With guidance from WCS leadership, the organization implemented an “inclusion model strategy” for our ERGs that incorporate three primary commitments: embracing transparency, creating opportunities for continued awareness, and promoting a culture of belonging. These commitments enabled our ERGs to build inclusive teams, to demonstrate greater collaborations, and to introduce bold new ideas to the organization as evidenced in this report.

Though ERG meetings were initially virtual due to COVID-19 limitations, each ERG was still able to plan and promote their cultural and commemorative events. These activities have since expanded into in-person events that included all of our zoo facilities and aquarium, ensuring full employee engagement. As a result, the membership of each group increased and the commitment to WCS’s DEI efforts grew.

Finally, we are heartened by the welcome our ERGs received in their inaugural term at WCS and are especially grateful for the commitment of our Executive Sponsors. The embrace and support of our dedicated colleagues to the journey WCS is on mean the world to us.

Yours in the interest of belonging,

Kevin V.G. Wells, Esq.
Chief Diversity Officer
ROADMAP OF WCS ERG KEY MILESTONES

**JANUARY**

The AAPI Employee Resource Group is officially named the Asian Society for Inclusion and Action (ASI).

BLAC chose its name, the “Black Leadership and Advancement Consortium,” developed its mission statement, and elected Jasmine Crowell and Elaine Glover-Rodriguez as the inaugural Co-leads.

**FEBRUARY**

For the first time, BLAC raises the Pan-African Flag at all 5 parks for Black History Month (BHM).

BLAC presented a PowerPoint perspective “Black History Month: WCS and the Black Community – 125 years” and highlighted a rendition of “Lift Every Voice and Sing” performed by Co-lead Elaine Glover-Rodriguez.

BLAC participated in virtual JIVE Career Panel.

ASI hosted its first WCS ERG virtual event, Lunar New Year, where attendees learned about the Chinese zodiac, new year customs, and how our members celebrate the holiday.

**MARCH**

WAGE hosts virtual WCS Trivia Night and collaborates with the History League to highlight “Women in WCS History.”

**JUNE**

BLAC hosted its first Juneteenth Celebration with a Luncheon featuring food from a Black-owned restaurant and a “Walk of Remembrance for Ota Benga.”

BLAC partnered with the not-for-profit Outdoor Afro for Juneteenth collaboration “Wild for All” to honor the 2.5 years that passed after the Emancipation Proclamation.

**AUGUST**

BLAC Co-lead Jasmine Crowell and WAGE Co-lead Melissa Nelson hosted a DEI Roundtable on “ERG Best Practices” at the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) Annual Conference.

BLAC created joint message with QUEER for staff to celebrate Black Pride Week.

**SEPTEMBER**

QUEER formed sub-committee to identify resources for WCS employees seeking gender-affirming care to the Human Resources Benefits Portal.

WAGE hosts its first in-person holiday party and gift exchange at the Bronx Zoo.

**OCTOBER**

BLAC worked with WCS leadership and HR to make the progressive step of changing the name “Columbus Day” to “Columbus/Indigenous People’s Day” for internal distributions.

WAGE presented its first Intersectional Book Club meeting on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women.

**JANUARY**

Over 120 staff joined ASIA for the Lunar New Year event at the Dancing Crane Café in the Bronx Zoo to enjoy cultural foods associated with the Lunar New Year and participated in guided prep stations that taught how to make and fold dumplings.

ASI consulted with EGAD and the Prospect Park Zoo to have signage translated into Chinese informing visitors how animals are significant in Asian culture and folklore, which is the first time the Chinese language appeared on an exhibit at WCS’s zoos and aquariums.

WAGE presented its second Intersectional Book Club meeting on Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents by Isabel Wilkerson.

**FEBRUARY**

BLAC was the first ERG to utilize a certified diverse vendor from the WCS Supplier Diversity portal for its two “Sippin’ Tea with B.L.A.C.” lunches at the Bronx Zoo and NY Aquarium.

BLAC launched its Courageous Conversations series; a series of honest conversations about real-life experiences seeking to break down barriers and share different perspectives.

QUEER distributed a national survey through AAZK, IMATA, IAATE, AAZV, and more to collect data on the experience of LGBTQIA+ zoo and aquarium employees.

**MARCH**

WAGE activities for Women’s History Month included the collection of menstrual support and toiletry items to donate to a local Bronx women’s shelter.

WAGE initiated and launched an email signature graphic designed by EGAD for members and allies to show support.

WAGE presented its third Intersectional Book Club meeting on Unbound: My Story of Liberation and the Birth of the Me Too Movement by Tarana Burke and She Said by Jodi Kantor and Megan Twohey.

WAGE launched a Mentoring Program.
VISUAL STATS ROADMAP OF WCS ERGS (cont.)

MAY

ASIA hosted "Our Stories, Our Archives: Inclusion, Omission, and Preservation of AAPI Voices" with the South Asian American Digital Archive and WCS Library and Archives.

ASIA established its ERG branding logo.

BLAC established its ERG branding logo.

QUEER presented guest speaker John Andrews from Lincoln Park Zoo for a benchmarking talk about its "Queerkats" employee group and the work being done for LGBTQIA+ employees at their zoo.

¡WILD! introduced shorter hybrid meetings at different parks to meet members where they are and provide additional opportunities for more union and non-union staff to participate.

WAGE hosted a BBQ at Bronx Zoo Dancing Crane Pavilion.

WAGE membership reached the 80-member mark.

JUNE

ASIA collaborated with the Education Department in a Youth Development Networking Night where youth part-time and seasonal employees enjoyed bubble tea catered by a local Asian-owned business, ziplined at Treetop Adventure, and met WCS staff including other ERGs.

BLAC collaborated with Black AF in STEM for the Black Birders Week walk at the Bronx Zoo.

BLAC hosted the second quarterly Courageous Conversations panel discussion on the history and significance of Juneteenth.

BLAC hosted an in-person Juneteenth Rooftop BBQ featuring music from NYA’s DJ 1n2, Jamie Glover, and separately bestowed an award to its Executive Sponsor ally, Niko Radjenovic, for his tremendous support and guidance.

QUEER held its first-ever live WCS Pride event on June 3rd and 4th at the Bronx Zoo and New York Aquarium, which included community partners, entertainment, and more.

QUEER held its first-ever Pride Brunch at the Bronx Zoo Watering Hole to celebrate Pride Month.

QUEER raised the Progress Pride Flag at all five WCS parks; WCS’s new CEO Monica Medina attended the Bronx Zoo flag raising.

¡WILD! introduced City Council Member Rafael Salamanca Jr. to Dominican Pride Event.

WAGE posted lactation space and support information to Human Health Services website.

¡WILD! provided the spark that started the conversations within Business Services on how to make healthy food more affordable. As a result, Business Services and the Education Department worked together to achieve a 50% Staff Discount at WCS restaurants.

The Structure of all ERGs
Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders (AAPI), and allies will work together to foster a sense of belonging in the work environment, celebrate diversity, build a strong community, and promote best practices for professional representation, equity, and inclusion throughout WCS.

**MISSION**

- Increase ASIA membership by 50% in 2023.
- Help reveal career pathways and diversity in recruitment.
- Create and foster a sense of belonging for AAPI part-time staff & volunteers at WCS.
- Increase representation of AAPI staff in full-time and leadership positions.
- Increase awareness of AAPI cultures, languages, and history.

**ERG GOALS**

- Increase ASIA membership by 50% in 2023.
- Help reveal career pathways and diversity in recruitment.
- Create and foster a sense of belonging for AAPI part-time staff & volunteers at WCS.
- Increase representation of AAPI staff in full-time and leadership positions.
- Increase awareness of AAPI cultures, languages, and history.

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**2022-2023 ACHIEVEMENTS**

We achieved our short-term goal of increasing group membership by 50%. Further, among one of our long-term goals to continue increasing awareness of AAPI culture, language and history, we presented several cultural events and initiated the Chinese language into the Z&A visitor community as a successful milestone.

**ASIA’S LUNAR NEW YEAR CELEBRATION**

This virtual event was WCS’s very first ERG event in 2022. The WCS extended community met online to learn about the Chinese zodiac and new year customs, and our members shared memories of how they celebrated the Lunar New Year. ASIA expanded WCS attendance to this event by 200% in 2023 with an in-person celebration at the Bronx Zoo. Over 120 WCS staff from all five parks participated in interactive dumpling-making and enjoyed traditional food from across Asia while learning of many cultures that celebrate Lunar New Year. Extending beyond our Bronx headquarters, a collaboration with Prospect Park Zoo enhanced Lunar New Year engagement with the local Brooklyn community through translated signage.

**ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH**

ASIA showcased its members’ contributions to conservation by simplifying personal and professional stories to be accessible and support others within the WCS community. Members were featured in four PBS Nature Blog posts, WCS’s Wild View blog, and a photo collage on OurWCS.org to further foster a sense of belonging for fellow AAPI. ASIA and WCS Library and Archives partnered with the South Asian American Digital Archive to present “Our Stories, Our Archives,” a virtual event that shared South Asian American stories and discussed the important role that archives has in uplifting the voices of the AAPI community and cultivating inclusion within WCS.

**FOCUS ON COMMUNITY WELL-BEING**

ASIA responded to concerns regarding anti-Asian hate activities by providing support, resources, and meaningful engagement. ASIA facilitated the first ERG-initiated Courteous Conversation at WCS by inviting Advanced Inquiry Program master’s degree graduate Katie Leung to speak about her journey as an Asian American woman in conservation. The event spread awareness about the rise in anti-Asian hate crimes in the US and underscored the professional challenges Asian Americans face in the sector. Attendees also reflected on their own solidarity and allyship with the AAPI community. ASIA distributed a comprehensive list of mental health and community resources for WCS AAPI employees.

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**Lena Chen** (She/Her)
ASIA Co-lead, Graphic Design Manager, Senior Communications

I am honored to be co-lead of ASIA and it has been a pleasure to work with a driven and enthusiastic team for the past year. Although my journey as a second-generation Chinese American is unique and my own, there is a huge comfort in discovering the common ground between our members and strengthening our professional relationships. I hope that everyone, regardless of their background and experience, can find a place in our ERGs to gain peer support and a sense of belonging.

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**Andy Juwel** (She/Her)
ASIA Co-lead, Assistant Manager, Guest Relations

It’s been a joy to witness ASIA’s growth in its inaugural year. ASIA provided celebration, reflection, development, and support to me when I first came to WCS and the group has shaped my personal and professional life in profound ways. As an Asian American woman and as a leader, I am inspired by the determination, thoughtfulness, and creativity of our members and am thankful for the strong bonds within our community.

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**Theresa Duncan** (She/Her)
ASIA Co-lead,

“I first heard about the ASIA ERG through a colleague when I came across an interesting conversation about ethnicity and the celebration of holidays. It surprised me that WCS had several ERGs. I wanted to be a part of the ASIA ERG since aftertimes the world of conservation excludes many diverse populations. I want to relate to folks with similar backgrounds as me within this type of work. Our city is such a diverse place with most WCS employees working in this region, it is important for me to be able to share the cultures and ethnicities that exist here.”

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**Shahela Begum** (She/Her)

“I initially joined WCS’s ASIA (Asian Society for inclusion and Action) to learn about diversity and inclusion, but I’ve gained so much more. By participating in our monthly meetings, I’ve found a new sense of community and belonging. As a WCS staff member based on the West Coast, this ERG has given me the opportunity to build strong relationships with co-workers across the organization, while also learning more about my Filipino culture and the broader Asian community. I’m so thankful to WCS for creating a way for staff to connect and support each other professionally while celebrating our diversity.”

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**Tara Chudoba** (She/Her)

“Having grown up on an ocean away from extended family, it was in adulthood that I began discovering how deeply intertwined my ethnicity and culture are with everything that I do. ASIA has become a space where I have been continuing to develop my own understanding of being AAPI in professional spaces. It’s given me opportunities to share stories, to give and receive support, and actively work on increasing awareness and access for fellow AAPI and allies. ASIA is exactly what I needed to elevate my WCS experience and would love to extend the invitation to others.”

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INTRODUCING WCS’S ERGS

BLAC
BLACK LEADERSHIP ADVANCEMENT CONSORTIUM

To cultivate an inclusive and diverse work environment that develops potential leaders, extends opportunities, and enables equitable growth for Black people within the Wildlife Conservation Society.

MISSION

ERG GOALS

- Celebrate Black culture to create a greater sense of belonging for Black people at WCS and educate allies of common issues in the Black community.
- Increase staff membership to 30 members by 2023.
- Develop and provide opportunities for equitable professional growth and support that enables the advancement of Black staff to the executive level in WCS.
- Establish strategic partnerships to address and surmount inequities for Black people in the conservation field.

2022-2023 ACHIEVEMENTS

We achieved our short-term goal of increasing group membership by 40%. Further, among one of our long-term goals to celebrate Black culture, we achieved our two milestone goals.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

BLAC pioneered the raising of the Pan African-American Flag at all five WCS parks and highlighted its attending staff members in the WCS newsletter. Several BLAC members have collaborated with PBS Nature to write blog pieces on various topics. Vaughn Severin, Chris Durasimini, Jasmine Crowell, Natalie Cash, Jordan Cox, Elaine Glover-Rodriguez, and Lou Bankston. They hosted a Black History Month Virtual Culmination led by Natalie Cash to educate on WCS Black History and the work that still needs to be done. BLAC has hosted two in-person lunches titled "Sippin’ Tea with BLAC" at NYA and BZ to connect with staff during Black History Month and enjoy African-inspired cuisine provided by WCS Business Services. They also utilized the new Supplier Diversity Program to hire a Black-owned small business, Pretty People Cravings, to serve authentic Ghanaian chocolate as their sweet treat.

COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS

BLAC launched "Courageous Conversations," a virtual dialogue series in which honest, candid discussions are had with Black leaders in the conservation sector. To date, they have had the honor of welcoming the perspectives of leaders from National Aquarium, Good Shepherd Services, Black AF in STEM, and Smithsonian’s National Zoological Park.

JUNETEENTH

In 2022, BLAC hosted the first Juneteenth Luncheon at BZ. In 2023, they hosted three events: a Bird Walk for Black Birders’ Week in collaboration with Black Af in STEM in which staff and members from Outdoor Afro, WCS, and Black Af in STEM were invited to participate in a bird walk led by BLAC Member Chris Johnson; a "Courageous Conversations" event with Co-lead Elaine Glover-Rodriguez moderating a dialogue that focused on being a Black conservationist and Juneteenth federal recognition; and a rooftop BBQ at NYA which featured music by the Aquarium’s DJ 1n2, Jamie Glover, and red foods and drinks to educate and pay homage to the significance of the color red in Black history and culture. Jasmine and Elaine also awarded Niko for his invaluable leadership, and announced the new elected Co-leads Yvonne Bennett, Administrative Coordinator of Education Administration, and Lou Bankston, Manager of Grants.

ACHIEVEMENTS

2022-2023

We achieved our short-term goal of increasing group membership by 40%. Further, among one of our long-term goals to celebrate Black culture, we achieved our two milestone goals. First, we presented several cultural events during Black History Month with Pan-African flag raisings and presented Courageous Conversations on common issues in the professional Black community; second, our Juneteenth celebration collaborations with a Black conservation organization and in-person “Sippin’ Tea with BLAC” luncheons.

ERG GOALS

- Establish strategic partnerships to address and surmount inequities for Black people within WCS and educate allies; we achieved two milestones. First, we presented several cultural events during Black History Month with Pan-African flag raisings.
- Develop and provide opportunities for equitable growth and support that enables the advancement of professional Black community; second, our Juneteenth celebration collaborations with a Black conservation organization and in-person “Sippin’ Tea with BLAC” luncheons.

Excerpts from testimonials:

Elaine Glover-Rodriguez (She/Her)
BLAC Co-lead, Assistant Director of Education Administration

“Given that the field of conservation has traditional barriers for Black people, I joined BLAC to be a stranger and more effective ally to hopefully bring more Black awareness for all levels of our organization.”

Christopher Durasimini (He/Him)
BLAC Co-lead, Wild Animal Keeper

“It was important to me to be around colleagues who share a passion of advancement for people of color not just within the institution, but in the field we’re in. I want to combine our collective resources and lived experiences in achieving the goals we deemed integral to us.”

Jasmine Crowell (She/Her)
BLAC Co-lead, Wild Animal Keeper

“It was important to me to be around colleagues who share a passion of advancement for people of color not just within the institution, but in the field we’re in. I want to combine our collective resources and lived experiences in achieving the goals we deemed integral to us.”

Jenifer Stenzel (She/Her)
Assistant Director of Education Administration

“I joined BLAC to support my coworkers and those who are looking to join our competitive field of animal care and conservation. It is important to have groups like this to promote the importance of equality, as well as diversity, and give a safe place for people to come and support one another. I am really impressed with the strides this group has made. This group inspires me.”
INTRODUCING WCS’S ERGS

QUEER PEOPLE AND ALLIES UNITING TO EXPAND EQUITY AND RESPECT

2022-2023 ACHIEVEMENTS

We achieved our short-term goal of increasing group membership by 150%. In regard to our long-term goal to celebrate and acknowledge the diversity of queer identities that exist amongst WCS employees and promote a shared sense of belonging, we achieved a milestone of raising the Progress Pride Flag at all five WCS Parks. With regard to our second long-term goal of ensuring a feeling of safety and care for queer WCS employees in their work in New York and around the world, QUEER formed a sub-committee to identify resources for WCS employees seeking gender-affirming care to the Human Resources Benefits Portal. This was a significant milestone.

PRIDE MONTH 2022 & 2023

For Pride Month 2022, QUEER introduced the Progress Pride Flag to all five WCS Parks. QUEER had a small flag-raising event at the Bronx Zoo and shared pictures and videos with the organization via internal broadcasts, OurWCS, and public social media accounts. Additionally, QUEER coordinated with ERG members who wrote Pride-themed blog posts for WCS Wild View blog on a variety of queer subjects. Our ERG also partnered with PBS Nature Blog for a series of Pride-themed posts that were featured on the PBS website.

For Pride Month 2023, QUEER worked with the WCS Business Services team to create a Pride Weekend event in June at the Bronx Zoo and the New York Aquarium. This was the first public-facing Pride celebration in WCS history. The Pride Weekend featured musical performances, a Vaguing competition, local community organizations, and more. QUEER is thrilled to have been able to create an inclusive event to celebrate queer people both inside and outside of WCS. Additionally, QUEER held a Pride Brunch event for WCS staff to celebrate each other and uplift our queer community. The Brunch featured rainbow breakfast foods, a slideshow on important queer history and queer figures, and fun photo ops.

Finally, QUEER organized a WCS team for the NYC Aids Walk. "My favorite ERG activity is the project I’m working on currently to improve support and resources for queer WCS employees working across 47 countries. It can be a dangerous world out there, it’s nice to help make it a little safer.”

PROVIDING WCS EMPLOYEES RESOURCES FOR TRANSITIONING AND GENDER AFFIRMING CARE

QUEER partnered with WCS Human Resources to start developing resources for employees who might be transitioning, or are looking for gender affirming health care. These resources will cover any information a WCS employee may need if they are transitioning or in need of gender affirming care, or if their teammate or direct report is in need of these resources. This initiative will cover information needed regarding insurance benefits, ways to be supportive of teammates, and other support services.

ENSURING A FEELING OF SAFETY AND CARE FOR QUEER WCS EMPLOYEES

QUEER is currently working to foster a supportive and safe environment for queer WCS employees to come and discuss issues that impact our community, and what matters most to them. Additionally, QUEER explored options to increase safety for all WCS employees, both at home and abroad. QUEER has been actively engaging with more WCS departments to ensure that the voices and concerns of queer people in our community are heard.

“As a gay man of a certain age, I have been out for more than 30 years, and my queer identity is an essential part of who I am. Being out, and therefore fully myself, has enabled me to build a supportive network of friends, and to be part of a larger community. Being “the gay guy” in the office, in my previous professional life, however, often felt very isolating. Even in the most progressive environments, heteronormativity is the default mode for professional interactions. I would often self-edit and assume that my life experiences weren’t relevant to the team. I joined the QUEER ERG mostly out of sense of curiosity. I knew I wasn’t the “only one” and wondered if my colleagues felt the same way I did.”

ERG GOALS

• Celebrate and acknowledge the diversity of queer identities that exist amongst WCS employees to create a shared sense of belonging and understanding and educate allies on community issues.
• Increase membership to 40 staff members by 2023.
• Ensure a feeling of safety and care for queer WCS employees in their work in New York and around the world.
• Forge partnerships with local organizations to increase visibility and acceptance of queer WCS employees at work and in the community.

MISSION

To bring queer people and allies together in solidarity to cultivate a stronger and more supportive workplace community, ensure equitable representation and growth, and foster openness and safety throughout WCS.

Cassandra Paul (She/Her/They/Them) QUEER Co-lead, Library Assistant
John Scott (He/Him) QUEER Co-lead, Associate, Individual Giving
Marcus Parker (He/Him) Library Assistant
Christopher Weikel (He/Him) Associate, Individual Giving
INTRODUCING WCS’S ERGS

WAGÉ WOMEN AND ALLIES FOR GENDER EQUITY

MISSION

To help advance equity in the working environment for women at WCS. To focus on equal pay and representation in leadership, parental benefits, mentorship, and other important issues and to not only to improve these factors at our five parks, but also across the organization and around the world, understanding that each context has unique challenges.

ERG GOALS

• Advance representation of women in leadership and executive roles with pay equity at all levels.
• Improve the experience of working parents during leave and return to work.
• Develop and provide opportunities for professional growth and support through social networking and mentoring.
• Continue to increase membership, paying particular attention to inclusivity of culture, race/color, background, full-time/part-time/seasonal/union staff, all genders, and other intersectional diversity.

WOMEN’S DAY & WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH 2022

This WAGÉ virtual Trivia Night in partnership with the History League was an engaging event. Over 30 members and interested employees participated.

EQUAL PAY DAY

March 15 was Equal Pay Day, and WAGÉ directed all interested employees participated.

WAGE MENTORING PROGRAM LAUNCHED

WAGE launched three mentoring circles and six mentoring pairs in March. We have participation from multiple departments: Global, Z&A, Wildlife Health, EGAD, Education, and CR; from staff both within and outside the US (Canada, Colombia, Peru); from multiple campuses (QZ, NYZ, and BZ); and from women (and one man) at a variety of levels within the organization. All circles and pairs were provided with onboarding materials to help guide their mentorship journey.

INDIGENOUS WOMEN, RACE, AND THE MEDIA

WAGE presented a video and workshop, “The intersections between violence against Women, Race, and the Media.” This video highlighted how their stories are often overlooked by mainstream media. Their follow-up meeting discussed the different stories and lessons learned.

LACTATION SPACES FOR EMPLOYEES

WAGE identified improvements to the designated lactation spaces at all five NYC facilities. This information, plus additional tips and guidelines for lactating employees has been made available on the Human Health Services page of Our WCS.

ACHIEVEMENTS

We not only achieved our short-term goal regarding membership, but we also have the largest ERG membership within WCS. WAGÉ achieved a significant milestone with our long-term goal to improve the experience of working parents during leave and return to work by posting lactation space and support information to the Human Health Services website. Regarding our second long-term goal to develop and provide opportunities for professional growth and support through social networking and mentoring, WAGÉ achieved the milestone of launching three mentoring circles and six mentoring pairs from staff both within and outside the US.

All of WAGÉ activities brought a wider awareness of various women’s issues and concerns to the WCS community and enabled the community to engage with hyperlinks and direct follow-ups. WAGÉ is the only ERG that utilizes sub-committees to enable its membership to get actively involved in making strong contributions to meet their goals.

2022-2023

“Through the women’s ERG I hope to gain a network of colleagues who not only support women’s rights within the organization but also each other. Together I hope we can ensure women are equally represented, respected, and given access to the things they need to function in a productive work environment. As a community we are forming a network of understanding that supports each other in both personal matters and career goals.”

“‘I found the experience of joining an ERG (in particular the WAGE team) a unique opportunity to connect with like-minded colleagues from other countries and continents, people I would normally have little access or chance to bond with. I see ERGs as a way to unite peers worldwide around a particular area of interest, transcending boundaries and building a stronger, more diverse and aligned WCS.”

“I would like to see more colleagues from across WCS get involved with WAGE. We are working on several issues that are applicable to a wide variety of people, including pay equity, career development, parental leave, and child care. Additional perspectives will make any initiatives that we develop more equitable and relevant to us.”

Laura Stozenthaler, Chief Associate Director, Conservation Technology

Daniela Pogliani (She/Her)

Melissa Nelson (She/Her)

Lily Mleczko (She/Her)

Sasson-Yenor (She/Her)

Danielle LaBruna (She/Her)

Jacinthe Sasson-Tenor (She/Her)

WAGE Co-lead, Associate Director, Conservation Technology

WAGE Co-lead, Assistant Center of Behavioral Husbandry

WAGÉ Webpage, OurWCS.
INTRODUCING WCS’S ERGs

WELCOMING AND INSPIRING LATIN DIVERSITY

**iWILD!**

Mission: **aprender, servir y crecer**

**MISSION**

- Increase membership by 25%.
- Establish presence at community-wide events.
- Promote visitation to and collaboration with other Latinx/Hispanic cultural organizations.
- Provide opportunities as a forum for gathering traction and making connections. Delicious food, Café Bustelo, and a welcoming ambience are just some of the contributing conduits to the great event turnout! Cafecitos have become synonymous with ¡WILD! I look forward to supporting other initiatives that continue to build our community, identity, and footprint in the organization.

To provide WCS Latinx/Hispanic (L/H) staff opportunities and support systems necessary for a successful work experience, to enhance our ethnic identity, promote our culture and traditions, and strengthen WCS’s mission con Nuestro Sabor. Matteo: aprender, servir y crecer

- Provide affordable and healthy food options for employee dining at all WCS parks.
- Increase membership by 25%.
- Establish presence at community-wide events.
- Promote visitation to and collaboration with other Latinx/Hispanic cultural organizations.
- Promote Latinx/Hispanic employees, countries of origin, and special Latinx/Hispanic commemorative days.
- Provide affordable and healthy food options for employee dining at all WCS parks.

**ERG GOALS**

**50% STAFF DISCOUNT FOR FOOD AT OUR RESTAURANTS**

The 50% staff discount goes into effect June 2023. As part of our mission to servir, ¡WILD! began conversations about food inequity with partners in WCS Business Services and Education departments. This led to Education securing a $25,000 grant to support the staff discount, our most proud collaborative accomplishment thus far.

**CAFECITOS DURING HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH**

To celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, ¡WILD! was the first ERG to host live events across all five parks and highlight the capabilities of our restaurant teams. Other ERGs have followed suit, collaborating for new and special events.

**BENEFITS FAIR PRESENSE FOR TRANSLATIONS**

Bilingual members supported Human Resources with translations at the 2022 Employee Benefits Fair.

**INVITED TO COUNCILMEMBER SALAMANCA DOMINICAN PRIDE EVENT**

¡WILD! introduced City Council Member Rafael Salamanca Jr. to WCS’s ERGs. The Council Member later honored and celebrated three of the BLAC ERG staff members at his Black History event.

**QUEENS ZOO EARTH DAY EVENT PRESENCE**

¡WILD! members celebrated Earth Day at Queens Zoo, showing the community pride in where they work.

**IN-PERSON HYBRID MEETINGS**

¡WILD! is testing shorter hybrid meetings at different parks to meet with partners in WCS Business Services and Education departments.

**ACHIEVEMENTS**

We achieved our short-term goal of increasing group membership by over 25%. Out of our four long-term goals, ¡WILD! successfully accomplished two significant milestones and fully achieved one goal. Regarding promoting Latinx/Hispanic employees, countries of origin, and special commemorative days, we presented several in-person Cafecitos during Hispanic Heritage Month. With our second long-term goal of establishing presence at community-wide Latinx/Hispanic cultural events, we engaged with a government official and lauded another peer ERG. Finally, we are the first ERG to successfully complete its long-term goal of assisting to provide affordable and healthy food options for employee dining.

**2022-2023 ACHIEVEMENTS**

- To provide WCS Latinx/Hispanic (L/H) staff opportunities and support systems necessary for a successful work experience, to enhance our ethnic identity, promote our culture and traditions, and strengthen WCS’s mission con Nuestro Sabor.
- Matteo: aprender, servir y crecer

**Miosoty Checo** (She/Her)

Executive Assistant to Executive Vice President, Public Affairs

**Shannen Rivadeneira** (She/Her)

Wild Co-lead

**WILD! Co-lead**

Manager, Cultural Development

**WILD! Co-lead**

Co-lead of Professional Development

**Rivadeneira**

**Shannen** (She/Her)

**Edna Roquez**

(She/Her)

**Tom Hurtubise**

(He/Him)

“iWILD! was the first ERG to host live events across all five parks and highlight the capabilities of our restaurant teams. Other ERGs have followed suit, collaborating for new and special events.”

**Priscilla Hernandez**

(She/Her)

“I chose this particular ERG because I feel a little removed from my Puerto Rican culture and would like to talk more with WCS people who are also Spanish/Latin-X all of the above! I want to practice my Spanish language more and grow a bond with people who have similar interests.”

“I joined ¡WILD! to see how we can advance our Latino/a educators and education in WCS.”

“My favorite ERG activity was helping to plan and host both the inaugural and travel-Cafecitos series. Cafecitos are our special way of bringing WCS staff together while also spreading awareness of the ¡WILD! ERG. We made concerted efforts to prioritize these onsite and in-person face-to-face opportunities as a focus for gathering traction and making connections. Delicious food, Café Bustelo, and a welcoming ambiance are just some of the contributing conduits to the great event turnout! Cafecitos have become synonymous with ¡WILD! I look forward to supporting other initiatives that continue to build our community, identity, and footprint in the organization.”

“I would like to talk more with WCS people who are also Spanish/Latin-X all of the above! I want to practice my Spanish language more and grow a bond with people who have similar interests.”
ERG EXECUTIVE SPONSORS

ERG Executive Sponsors are accomplished, respected, and influential leaders within WCS who are assigned to mentor and advocate for individual ERGs. Though they may share the same diversity identity as their ERG members or serve as an “ally,” ERG Executive Sponsors help ERG leaders build their respective groups. Serving as the liaison between the ERG and senior management, Executive Sponsors are:

- **Advocates** who consult with ERG leaders on various issues and advance possible initiatives to peer executives and middle managers.
- **Brokers** who assist the ERG to move forward by making connections within and outside the organization, and by ensuring group leaders understand WCS’s mission and priorities.
- **Mentors** who directly and indirectly teach professional and leadership skills to ERG leaders and members.

The organization would like to acknowledge and thank these Executive Sponsors who have encouraged and supported our ERG Co-leaders and members to approach obstacles in new ways, and who have provided key insights to ensure that our ERGs thrive.
MEASURING DEI AT WCS

RESPONSES TO EMPLOYEE SURVEYS
N = 496 full-time permanent employees and N = 410 part-time and seasonal employees

- I believe that WCS actively seeks employees from diverse backgrounds.
  - FULL-TIME PERMANENT: 59% AGREE, 27% NEUTRAL, 14% DISAGREE
  - PART-TIME & SEASONAL: 87% AGREE, 10% NEUTRAL, 3% DISAGREE

- I feel like I belong at WCS.
  - PART-TIME & SEASONAL: 74% AGREE, 21% NEUTRAL, 5% DISAGREE

- I am comfortable discussing my career path with my manager.
  - PART-TIME & SEASONAL: 77% AGREE, 15% NEUTRAL, 8% DISAGREE
  - FULL-TIME PERMANENT: 65% AGREE, 17% NEUTRAL, 18% DISAGREE

- I feel that I am growing professionally at WCS.
  - FULL-TIME PERMANENT: 65% AGREE, 16% NEUTRAL, 19% DISAGREE

Agreement by full-time permanent employees who responded to the survey increased by 10% since 2021.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE US-BASED WORKFORCE
N = 962-984 full-time permanent employees and N = 1,134–1,665 part-time and seasonal employees

- Race/ethnicity distribution from 2019–2022
  - White: 57%, Hispanic or Latino: 24%, Black or African American: 12%
  - Asian or Pacific Islander: 5%, Two or more races: 4%
  - Other: 8%

- Full-time permanent: 56% White, 23% Hispanic or Latino, 13% Black or African American

- Age distribution in 2022
  - FULL-TIME PERMANENT:
    - 14 to 19: 12%, 20 to 29: 31%, 30 to 39: 25%, 40 to 49: 25%, 50 to 59: 21%, 60+: 11%
  - PART-TIME & SEASONAL:
    - 14 to 19: 33%, 20 to 29: 45%, 30 to 39: 11%, 40 to 49: 5%, 50 to 59: 3%, 60+: 3%

- 54% of full-time permanent and 57% of part-time and seasonal employees were women; 42% of directors and above were women.
- We do not collect data on LGBTQ+ identity for the entire workforce, but survey data indicated that 19% of full-time permanent and 29% of part-time and seasonal employees identified as LGBTQ+.