**January 3, 2020 – Government Relations DEIJ Listening Session**

Facilitated by: Caitlin Cattelino

1. **What are the current and/or near-future DEIJ-related efforts that your team is working on?**

* College organizing and youth engagement
* Working with more diverse communities in the context of our border work
* Outreach
  + Working to build relationships with non-traditional partners – ex: Sunrise Movement
  + Create a two-way street relationship
  + It’s important to show up/attend their events without an ask
    - Showing up in solidarity; “to hold space” in their community
  + We are seen as a “white colonial structure” – we work within law and science
    - Learn from other communities – what are their values, culture
    - Recognizing white privilege; decolonizing mind and heart and work
  + When hosting events, consider access.
    - Am I creating opportunities for people to attend or creating barriers (geographically, age (bar))?
  + Make land acknowledgments a consistent and authentic part of events
  + Lobby Days
    - Consider who is coming to lobby day, in-districts
    - Consider voices we elevate in media
* Defenders – completed pay equity comparisons with other organizations; continue to look at salaries

1. **Where do you see opportunities for DEIJ-related growth in your department and its goals and efforts?**

* Work to avoid tokenizing, especially in Outreach
* Identify more organizations in DC to connect with
  + Green Latinos
    - Ask about their policy decisions; what issues they are prioritizing
* Identify volunteer opportunities or trainings for the department
* Financial support for someone (a student?) to attend an environmentally-related conference
  + Could be a scholarship or a travel grant
  + In Jamie’s/defenders name
  + Empowering that person to get a new skill; the benefit to them helps avoid tokenizing
* Paid internship
  + Defenders had some paid opportunities years ago
  + But it became the norm within enviro community to have unpaid internships
  + Question: Has the legal definition of intern has changed?
  + Structured internship program so onuses isn’t on individual departments but uniform across the organizations
* Internship/Fellowship for people of color
  + Essay contest and winner to attend a conference
    - Emerging voices to highlight

1. **Where do you see opportunities for DEIJ-related growth at Defenders as an organization?**

* Sending staff to colleges/universities directly to spread message of wildlife conservation (and career opportunities)
  + Rotating staff; monthly
  + Target universities, especially historically black colleges
  + Strengthen relationships with academia
  + Touch a number of different departments; not just biology
  + What about working with high school students? Access to education is still a barrier

1. **Other feedback:**

* DEIJ definitions
  + What about Justice?
    - Synergy for social, environmental, racial justice
    - Piece from Dr. Martin Luther King Junior's *Why We Can't Wait*:
      * *I must confess that over the past few years I have been gravely disappointed with the white moderate. I have almost reached the regrettable conclusion that the Negro's great stumbling block in his stride toward freedom is not the White Citizen's Counciler or the Ku Klux Klanner, but the white moderate, who is more devoted to "order" than to justice; who prefers a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice; who constantly says: "I agree with you in the goal you seek, but I cannot agree with your methods of direct action"; who paternalistically believes he can set the timetable for another man's freedom; who lives by a mythical concept of time and who constantly advises the Negro to wait for a "more convenient season." Shallow understanding from people of good will is more frustrating than absolute misunderstanding from people of ill will. Lukewarm acceptance is much more bewildering than outright rejection.”*