What Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Mean to Gen Z

Diversity is being invited to the party; Inclusion is being asked to dance.

– Verna Myers, Activist

“There’s lots of talk about diversity these days,” Noble Prize winner Richard Thaler said in a recent McKinsey interview. He was referring to the myriad of current conversations on the subject of DEI, or the policies and programs that promote the representation of individual differences such as gender, age, race, ethnicity and religion in our society. “But it’s also important to have diversity in how people think,” he was quick to add. Using Thaler’s insight, one might ask the question: What does Gen Z think about diversity, equity and inclusion? A recent review of the literature and research available reveals that this generation is thinking very differently about DEI. Consider these findings.

Gen Z began learning about other cultures, social issues and global problems much sooner than any other generation, thanks largely to the internet. Zoomers never knew a world without 24/7 access to information literally at their fingertips. They have become more socially-minded earlier and are more committed to social change than any other generation. They are more open-minded yet more skeptical and more politically independent. Over the past 2 decades, they grew up watching adults struggle mightily with DEI issues from a societal, economic and political perspective. They have paid attention. And they have been deliberate and intentional in their responses and behaviors. In short, DEI is already integral to their world.

For Zoomers, diversity and inclusion are more than the traditional indicators of race, gender, age and religion. To them, it is about how different points of view are heard and valued, what is referred to as cognitive diversity, or an understanding of the variety of ways people think. Different language, personalities, work styles and lived experiences are the result of different cultural, educational and social backgrounds. Gen Z seems to understand the authenticity of this mindset and its application in the real world by making people feel heard, seen and included.

Gen Z is bringing these values to the workplace as well. In a recent Monster survey, 83% of Zoomer job candidates say that a company’s commitment to diversity and inclusion is important to them when choosing an employer. They seek jobs that offer flexibility and balance between work life and personal life, although the boundaries are often blurred by technology. They have a willingness to work hard to advance their financial stability, but they also recognize that they are more than their job or title. This has led to some degree of early job hopping, but as the consulting group Oliver Wyman recently reported in its study, changing jobs frequently does not carry the stigma that it had with previous generations.

By 2030, it is estimated that Gen Z will represent 32% of the U.S. workforce. Concurrently, the U.S. population will be 52% non-Hispanic white. Slightly less than half of Gen Z will belong to a minority class (Pew Research Center). As our demographics shift toward a greater state of diversity, Zoomers might represent the first generation with a compelling way to not only get people invited to the party, but also to dance.
Editor’s Note

This issue features the FPP Class of 2019 who are just graduating from college in May. For all of us at FPP, we congratulate each and every one of them as well as their achievements. How time has flown by! While many are joining the workforce and beginning their careers, others are pursuing a master’s degree in their chosen field. Some are returning to the Chicago area, others have taken job offers in other states. We think you will enjoy reading their comments which include how FPP helped shape their college experience over the past 4 years.

The Class of 2019 is memorable for many reasons, particularly their Capstone Ceremony. The community invitation to the ceremony included this line:

“Teenagers in the communities of Oak Park and River Forest have been raising money for charitable purposes since 2012. On Thursday, May 23 (2019), at their annual capstone ceremony, they will announce that their fund has reached $1,000,000. Quite an accomplishment for 16- and 17-year olds.”

Yes, the Class of 2019 put the FPP endowment fund over the million dollar mark! Every previous senior class’s fundraising success enabled them to do it. After all, that’s how philanthropy works. We pay it forward.

Congratulations to all the parents as well. They could not have done it without your support!

Rick King
FPP Post Editor

FPP Class of 2019 Alumni Updates

Congratulations to the FPP Alumni who are Graduating from College in May.

Bridget Boockmeier

I am graduating from the University of Alabama with a dual-degree (B.A.) of Public Relations and Communication Studies with a concentration in International Relations and Communications.

Throughout my four years at UA, I was a Senior Account Executive and Three-Year Plan Director for Capstone Agency, a student-run communications firm on campus, the President and former VP of Programs for the Public Relations Council of Alabama, Vice President of Philanthropy for Alpha Omicron Pi Fraternity, a member of Order of Omega, Rho Lambda, Omicron Delta Kappa, and Lambda Pi Eta honors societies. I was a member of the Carl A. Elliott Society, which is dedicated to social justice.

I think I used most of my FPP experience in my time with Capstone Agency when I participated in Createathon where we spent 24 hours developing a campaign for a local nonprofit to encourage local residents of Tuscaloosa to donate money. Additionally, when I served as the VP of Philanthropy for Alpha Omicron Pi Fraternity, I used my skills I learned from FPP to raise over $80,000 for our philanthropy, the Arthritis Foundation, in 9 months. I organized 5 total events, 1 in which I created and implemented myself. I also took a class that was dedicated to creating a fundraising campaign for Secret Meals for Hungry Children, where over the course of the semester, my group and I raised over $10,000 and created an entire philanthropy event to fundraise for this amazing organization.

Starting this summer, I will be working with Weber Shandwick, a global public relations firm, in their Chicago office.

Celia Doyle

I will be graduating from Johns Hopkins University, where I majored in Civil and Systems Engineering and minored in Environmental Studies.

During my undergrad, I was president of our chapter of the American Society of Civil Engineers and am current president of Hopkins’ chapter of Engineers Without Borders (EWB). Previously I worked on a water distribution project in Ecuador with EWB-JHU. Outside of these clubs I do research related to systems modeling and I am a member of the rock-climbing club and Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority.

I was initially accepted to the Ecuador team of EWB because of my fundraising experience with FPP. I have been able to use my knowledge of grant applications, letter writing and donor solicitation meetings to gain funding for our projects. Aside from this, one of my biggest takeaways from FPP was how to collaborate with others, especially when it comes to team decision-making. This is knowledge that I have applied in both my courses and extracurriculars.

continued next page
This summer I will be working for the Electric Power Research Institute on a project related to energy grid modeling and optimizing renewable energy integration. In the fall, I’ll be returning to Johns Hopkins to complete my master’s degree in systems engineering. I hope to work at the intersection of engineering and sustainability following my graduation in December.

**Rachel Hansen**

I’ll be graduating from Loyola University Chicago majoring in Social Work. Throughout my time at Loyola, I served as a member in Challenging Antiquated Norms For Gender Equality (CHANGE), an on-campus organization that focuses on creating programming around prevention, awareness, and response to gender-based violence. Additionally, I participated in the Interprofessional Rural Telehealth Program at Loyola in which I learned about providing telehealth services to indigenous populations in rural locations. I will be traveling to Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota this May to learn from Oglala Lakota professors. Outside of Loyola, I have served as a volunteer ESL tutor at Madonna Mission, a non-profit that serves refugees and immigrants and as a volunteer for the Crisis Text Line, a non-profit that serves individuals who are experiencing crisis situations.

My experiences at FPP have greatly enriched my experiences, particularly within the social work field. My knowledge of fundraising and program development that I acquired through my experiences at FPP allowed me to be a valuable member of the organizations that I have served. All the FPP experiences and mentorship allowed me to have a great foundation of knowledge going into college and at Vanderbilt, I am grateful for the opportunities that I had to enrich the lives of young people in my community. Watching these students learn and grow was one of the most rewarding experiences of my college career. Looking back on my time at FPP and at Vanderbilt, I am grateful for the opportunities that I had to make a positive impact on the world. These experiences have shaped my values and my career aspirations, and I am excited to continue using my strengths to help others in whatever ways I can.

For the next two years, I will be working as a Business Analyst for Capital One in Washington, D.C. After the completion of my rotational program, I plan to apply to law school.

**Claire Love**

I will be graduating from Saint Louis University with a bachelor’s degree in Exercise Science with minors in interprofessional education and leadership and change management.

During my time at SLU I was able to be involved in a number of extracurriculars from playing on the women’s club ultimate frisbee team, volunteering at a local middle school through an organization called overground railroad to literacy and advancing the profession of athletic training by participating in my school’s athletic training society. I have also been active at the district and national level in the Mid-America Athletic Trainer’s Association (MAATA) and the National Athletic Trainer’s Association (NATA).

On of the biggest lessons I learned during my time in FPP was the importance of decision making and the collaborative process it takes to achieve a goal. This lesson has been instrumental in the different leadership roles I have had on campus the past four years. It has helped be a better resident advisor with managing things like our budget and helping with roommate conflict resolution. I have used these skills when working within MAATA at the district and national level. It helped me ensure that all the students I represent are being heard and having their needs advocated for. I am a stronger, more vocal leader because of the experience and mentorship that I had during my time in FPP.

I will be staying at SLU for one more year to complete my master’s degree in athletic training.

**Lawrence Landfair**

I’ll be graduating from Illinois State University with a double major in Political Science and Sociology. During my time at ISU, I was involved in many extracurricular activities: however, for the sake of brevity, here are my most recent.

Assessing Concrete Community-wide Equitable Solutions Sustainably: ACCESS is a diverse, multidisciplinary committee dedicated to addressing food insecurity and providing students with unique learning opportunities. I created this committee and brought together key
stakeholders to develop my “Lab” Grocery Store Initiative, which should continue long after I graduate. Members include ISU faculty/staff, students, town officials, and local partners who are committed to sustainable and equitable solutions that benefit students and the Normal community. The committee also ensures that planning and execution are aligned with ISU’s strategic goals and development plans of the Town of Normal.

Student Navigator Program: As the first program coordinator, I oversaw its formation and current operation. I created key relationships with the university, community, and government entities to consolidate resources in a basic needs database for ISU students. I then advocated for the further fulfillment of basic needs to policymakers on behalf of the university. I also met with students one-on-one to discuss hardships and connect them with community and government resources.

Responsible Cities PAC: I was approached by Responsible Cities for my work in the campus community. I was also specifically asked to be placed on their Normal Town Council Committee. As a member of this committee, I created questions that pertained to students and assessed the answers candidates gave. I interviewed both Republican and Democratic candidates throughout this process and eventually selected the one who would get the Responsible Cities endorsement.

Student Legislative Advocacy Coalition: After founding SLAC, I was elected its first executive director and made sure to connect the organization to important policymakers (state, local, and federal) that influence the student experience. I helped members formulate issues important to them and pushed them to advocate for themselves to policymakers.

While most of my work hasn’t involved much philanthropy in the monetary sense, it has been very extensive around community service. In politics, asking policymakers for support on issues is a lot like asking donors for money. You must show them how you will be able to execute concepts with attention to detail. Just as donors would want you to be responsible with their money, a policymaker feels the same about their endorsement. FPP helped me with confidently laying out my vision and persuading those with influence the reason that they should care and how it will benefit their constituency. The best, and most difficult, lesson I learned at FPP was the preparation and experience for when it comes time for making “The Ask”. As hard as it can be to ask someone for their definitive support on an issue, I find that with each one it’s become less daunting. Surprisingly, “The Ask” has become my favorite part of any meeting.

After I graduate, I plan to start my career in the public sector. I applied to the James Dunn Fellowship in the Illinois Governor’s Office and was asked to interview with the Office of External Affairs and the Office of Lt. Governor Stratton. If selected, I’ll work in an office for a year gaining first-hand experience and full state employee benefits! No matter the outcome I will be taking a year off from my academics before heading to Washington D.C. where I will pursue my master’s degree in public administration.

I’ll be graduating from Saint Louis University with a bachelor’s degree in healthcare management and public policy. I was a Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarship recipient, a program with service requirements each semester in the Greater St. Louis area. I have also volunteered in soup kitchens, food pantries, tutoring sessions and COVID vaccination clinics. I am also in the Future Leaders of Healthcare Management club where we focus on current events in healthcare administration, job opportunities and working to have seasoned healthcare administrators do guest lectures on their career path.

FPP taught me many great basics that I have carried with me throughout my college career. Most notable are networking/conversational skills and confidence within public speaking. FPP fostered relationships with peers of mine that were like-minded and enthusiastic about the future. I also learned a great deal about community relations and inner workings from FPP which helped me navigate things like securing a corporate internship and full-time job upon graduation.

After graduation, I will be working full-time at Aon in Chicago. My specific role will be as an associate broker on the national healthcare practice team. The team is responsible for fostering and maintaining the relationship between healthcare insurance vendors and large hospital systems/healthcare providers.

I am graduating from Fordham University with a double major in Theatre Performance and Humanitarian Studies. I am an elected student senator; serve as a student rep on the Facilities Board at the school, helped run the “swipe out hunger” campaign at Fordham Lincoln Center and performed in many shows! Right now I’m writing my undergraduate thesis focused on psychodrama in refugee camps for female refugees.

My dream is to start organizations that implement drama therapy in refugee and asylum camps. Big dream, I know, so how will I pursue that? I will work as hard as I always worked and possibly procure public interest from acting ventures that allow me the power and influence to fund such organizations. Fame and power CAN be used for good, but you have to balance the selfish with the selfless.
Camille Scibeck

I am graduating from the University of Colorado at Boulder with a double major in Neuroscience and Psychology on a pre-med track. I was actively involved in Alpha Epsilon Delta which is a premedical fraternity. AED has a service component and so I always remembered the importance of giving your time and not just your money.

After graduating, I plan on taking a gap year and will be working as a Medical Assistant at The Women’s Clinic of Northwestern before going on to medical school.

Natalia Nikolic

I am graduating from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign with a BS in Molecular and Cellular Biology. Throughout college, I was involved in many extracurricular and volunteer activities! I served as Vice President for the Illini Swim Club and a professional biology fraternity called Beta Psi Omega.

I absolutely loved being a part of these organizations and met some of my best friends in them. Being a part of the executive board taught me many skills that I will bring to my future career. Additionally, I was a member of the Illini Medical Screening Society where we provided free health screenings to low-income members of the Urbana-Champaign community.

In FPP, I learned valuable teamwork and leadership skills that I have brought to many aspects of my life in college. For example, in our first year of FPP, we split into groups to visit and interview organizations that had applied for a grant. For each organization we visited, one member of our team served as “team leader” and led most of the interview. This experience allowed me to become confident in my leadership and interview skills and I was able to utilize this in running and organizing over 30 interviews for potential new members of Beta Psi Omega, a professional biology fraternity.

Additionally, in our second year of FPP, we worked together to plan fundraising events. This experience gave me event planning skills that I was able to utilize as Vice President of Beta Psi Omega in planning five large events surrounding each of our Three Pillars of Philanthropy. Similarly, I was able to utilize these skills in organizing fundraisers for Illini Swim Club to keep the organization running.

Career-wise, I am planning on working as a medical assistant for a gap year before attending medical school. Life-wise, I strive to enjoy every day and to be constantly learning!

Kaitlin Vogen

I am graduating from the University of Vermont, majoring in Communication Sciences and Disorders with a minor in Special Education. I am involved in a few things related to my major, including research in a motor speech development lab. I am also a peer mentor for communication sciences and disorder and a member of the speech and hearing club.

Outside of my career interests, I am on the rock-climbing team and a member of the student alumni association. The knowledge I gained through FPP helped me in my role on the student alumni association as we planned and executed our annual week long fundraiser for over 250 clubs and organizations on campus as well as other fundraising events over the years. More importantly, I think FPP gave me a better understanding of the importance of giving back to your community.

I will be attending Northwestern University this fall for my master’s degree in speech language and learning.

Please join us for a reception and silent auction as we fundraise to support local nonprofits. Enjoy light appetizers and drinks, bid on some fabulous items, and help us reach our $5,000 match!

RSVPs are appreciated by May 10 to Karen Tardy at fpp@oprfcf.org.

Can’t attend but want to donate?
oprcf.org/future-philanthropists
Corinne Joss

I graduated from the University of Richmond in Virginia with a degree in Politics, Philosophy, Economics, & Law (PPEL) with a concentration in Economics as well as minors in Entrepreneurship and Latin American, Latino, & Iberian Studies. During my time at the University, I was fortunate enough to engage with both the University and surrounding communities. Throughout all four years of college, I volunteered as a tutor and mentor for a not for profit after school program for youth from at-risk communities. I worked with the same group of five children for all four years. Together, we spent time encouraging dialogue regarding racial injustice, politics, mental health, and activism as well as working on traditional school subjects. It was an extremely rewarding experience. In line with my school studies, I was selected to work with a local nonprofit, Seed-Stage Accelerator, to scale startups. I was exposed to the entrepreneurial ecosystem through hands-on work with entrepreneurs and investors. I also worked as a Spanish translator and interpreter for a free clinic providing basic human services and healthcare to local residents.

Since graduation, I have used many of the skills I learned through FPP. One of the biggest lessons I learned from FPP was to thoughtfully choose how to spend my time and money! It is quite easy to do the opposite of that with those two things. Whether it is volunteering my time or a charitable donation, I understand that my choices have an impact. Today, I try to make sure I am consistently giving back to my local community. Since being a member of FPP, I have also been on the other side of the table - working with organizations who are applying for grants. These situations have made me realize the unique experience I was afforded as a 16 year old in FPP! All my thanks go to the FPP adults and mentors who help shape this incredible program!

Currently, I work for Google as a financial analyst in Chicago. I am in a rotational program where I am exposed to multiple Finance teams to develop different skills. Outside of work, I spend my time traveling, practicing yoga, and reading. I am also lucky enough to still see some of my fellow FPP members on a regular basis!

Kayla York

On May 8, 2021, I graduated from Howard University with a B.A. in Economics and a B.A. in Political Science and a subfield in Public Administration and Public Policy. At Howard, I was heavily involved in all three branches of student government (SGA). I served as President of our SGA Senate, was the campaign manager for the winning SGA executive slate in 2020, and was later appointed to our SGA judiciary my senior year. I was also initiated into Alpha Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., an active member of community service organization Jewels, Incorporated, and volunteered at the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Greater Washington, D.C.

Since graduation, I returned to Chicago to work at corporate law firm, Chapman and Cutler LLP. As an analyst in Chapman’s innovative two-year program for post graduates interested in gaining work experience before applying to graduate programs, I have rotated through a variety of practice groups such as corporate securities, corporate finance and commercial lending.

My involvement in FPP has been influential to me in a number of ways. Whether collaborating with a team or pitching a new idea to a supervisor, I rely on the practice I have had in the past working with my peers in FPP on high stakes decisions. Also, at the core of our work is connecting with others on a deeper level to understand their needs, and I try to take this approach when working with clients. This fall, I am staying in Chicago to attend Northwestern Pritzker School of Law on a merit scholarship. I look forward to staying in the Chicagoland area for at least a few more years and getting involved in community service projects here.

Zoomers Giving and Volunteering Making Gains

Despite the fact that 68% of the members of Generation Z are still under 21 years of age, their giving patterns are already ahead of where other generations were at that age. The same is true for the number of volunteer hours compared to other generations at their age. Gen Z is on track to become the most giving generation ever.

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<th>Annual Giving</th>
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Source: Giving USA (2022)
Nonprofit Brands are as Important as Corporate Brands

by Jeet Chugh, FPP ‘23

In her article, Nonprofit Marketing: The Why and How of Branding, author Jennie Winton explores brands in the nonprofit and corporate world, first by establishing what a brand is. Winton states, simply, that a brand represents an organization’s reputation. “Brand is not your logo, mission statement, or website. It’s the sum total of the thoughts and emotions that come to someone’s mind when they think of your organization.”

This simple principle turned out to be eye-opening to me. Before reading this article, I was under the impression that branding was a complex and multifaceted system that incorporated marketing, product development and more. However, I now understand that marketing is one of many tools used by nonprofit organizations and corporations to boost brand identity.

Winton emphasizes the need for nonprofits to understand and communicate something unique that sets them apart from other organizations in their space. By defining and promoting their unique value proposition, they can create a stronger connection with their audience and build greater awareness and support for their cause. It’s not about being “the first to serve x number of people.” It’s about differentiating one’s organization from its competitors in a way that makes them more notable, more reputable and more likely to be funded.

Leeann Alameda, author of Why Nonprofit Branding is Essential to Your Organization, further states that having a better brand image can boost financial support, resources, talent, partnerships and community standing. A common theme for both authors is the need to differentiate your organization from competitors. Alameda writes that it is crucial to understand what specific unmet need you are serving. In addition, she also talks about keeping consistent messaging among different platforms and having a simple, short message that conveys your mission.

As a nonprofit organization, FPP uses many of the tips mentioned to improve its brand. We have a consistent message (“Teaching the art, science and business of philanthropy to the next generation”), wide local name recognition and color schemes that are used across all FPP-related communications, whether it be this newsletter, informational correspondence or social media. In addition, FPP differentiates itself as a program centered around youth philanthropy leadership. We leverage the program’s uniqueness to “sell” the idea to donors, civic leaders and others in the communities we serve.

Overall, Winton and Alameda helped me learn about the importance of branding in the nonprofit world.
Joeisms

Return Your Phone Calls Promptly.

Joe Smith, FPP Mentor since 2011

It is perfectly acceptable and understandable if you have no interest in reading this essay any further since it implies that you employ a technology that seems anachronistic. In defense of the use of the telephone, no matter what its current incarnation, practical experience and published studies have demonstrated that hearing the sound of another person’s voice and responding in real time with one’s own voice provides not only comfort to both parties but also an increased sense of trust.

As part of my failure at retirement, I continue to work with small and start-up companies. One of the first exercises we undertake is an understanding of the challenges the organization faces. No matter how big or small the organization is, the issue of Effective Communication arises no later than the third topic. The irony of this fact is never lost on me.

Think of the list of tools at your disposal for communication:
- Email
- Text
- Cellphone
- Paper and Pencil
- Fax
- Carrier Pigeon
- Smoke Signals
- Morse Code

There is no shortage of tools. There is a lack of understanding as to the best way to humanize those tools. The proof of Effective Communication is not what was said but what was heard. It is for that reason that we wrote those personal thank-you notes to our donors. They are the product of your mind, transmitted by your hand to reveal your heart.

We will always be your Mentors.

“A wealth of information creates a poverty of attention.”
– Herbert Simon

“The deepest level of communication is not communication, but communion. It is wordless. It is beyond words. It is beyond speech. It is beyond concept.”
– Thomas Merton

U.S. Party Identification by Generation
(as a percentage)

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Source: Statista Research (2022)