



# Advancing Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging at VHB

Diversity is a core value at VHB, and we are dedicated to fostering a culture of belonging where everyone feels welcome, respected, valued, and has equitable opportunities to develop and drive their careers. People from all backgrounds and life experiences are encouraged to be their authentic selves and are valued equally. We recognize that our efforts have no end date; we will always be iterating and improving as we continue this journey.

“Research tells us that diverse organizations with inclusive cultures are more likely to attract and retain talented professionals; be high performing, innovative, and agile; and meet or exceed financial targets. As important as these outcomes are, they are not the end game. At VHB, we are committed to sustaining a diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization because only in such an environment can each of us become our best self.” — *Mike Carragher, President & CEO*



VHB’s **DEIB Steering Committee** (DEIBSC), works to advance our strategic focus on DEIB, both internally and externally. Chaired by Mike Carragher, President & CEO, the 12-member committee includes executive, regional, and office leaders, as well as representatives from employee resource groups. The DEIBSC is responsible for helping to establish VHB’s long-term DEIB vision, goals and annual initiatives and measuring progress. Our focus areas are divided into four categories: **culture**, **talent acquisition**, **clients**, and **industry**, which are highlighted here.

## Culture

Fostering an inclusive culture with intellectually curious individuals who embody our Core Values daily, so everyone feels a sense of belonging

## Equity

- VHB has longstanding policies and procedures in place to verify we are paying employees fairly and appropriately
- We conduct extensive internal salary audits and benchmarking to maintain competitive pay across our footprint
- We build rigor into our pay equity policies and procedures by retaining independent experts to review pay equity

- VHB was one of the first companies to sign the Boston Women's Workforce Council's 100% Talent Compact
- VHB reports companywide employee demographic and salary data anonymously to BWCC every two years to address gender and racial wage gaps

## Inclusion

Below are some of the ways VHB is advancing a more inclusive culture

### Unconscious Bias Awareness Workshop

- For five years, VHB has hosted unconscious bias awareness workshops
- The workshop increases employee awareness of bias and its pervasiveness
- All employees are encouraged to participate
- Recently, we presented our curriculum to an external audience

### Employee Engagement Survey Results

- Recent survey revealed positive results from employees
- 87% feel empowered to bring their authentic selves to work
- 88% affirm VHB's dedication to cultivating an inclusive environment
- 88% feel a profound sense of belonging within their teams

### VHB Employee Resource Groups

VHB Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) foster an inclusive workplace culture

- Our seven ERGs include:
  - Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity Alliance (IDEAL)
  - Green Team
  - Emerging Professionals
  - VHB Cares
  - College Ambassadors
  - Parent Group
  - Elder Care Group
- ERGs engage employees in shared concerns and interests



## Talent Acquisition

Initiatives to attract and hire more diverse qualified candidates

### College Ambassador Program

- A structured initiative to cultivate lasting connections with diverse higher education institutions
- 50+ ambassadors actively engaged at 40+ different schools
- Amplifies organizational vibrancy and expands insights through educational collaborations
- Committed to strengthening ties and enhancing recruitment efforts with historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), we are connected to Morgan State University, North Carolina A&T, and Howard University

### CREST (Commercial Real Estate Success Training)

- A 10-week paid internship program
- Focuses on providing opportunities for women and people of color
- Offers insights into the commercial real estate industry
- VHB has supported CREST since 2018, hosting four interns

### VHB's Guiding Principles for Hiring & Attracting Talent

- Supports hiring managers in attracting and hiring employees from a full spectrum of diversity

## Clients

We're focused on elevating and embedding DEIB throughout all the work that we do

### Supplier Diversity

- VHB partners with small and diverse businesses in public and private sectors
- VHB's supplier registration portal, powered by minority-owned business [Supplier Gateway](#), helps identify new diverse suppliers and track and report data
- B2B@VHB networking events, hosted by VHB offices, advance supplier diversity by connecting existing and potential new minority- and women-owned businesses (M/W/DBE) and other diverse businesses

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**65%** of VHB's spend on billable projects was made up of small/diverse owned businesses in 2023.

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### Enhancing Equity in the Built Environment

- VHB develops transportation solutions that provide equitable access to essential community services and resources
- We partner closely with communities to identify and address their specific needs
- We are committed to creating infrastructure solutions that are not only equitable and inclusive but also future-focused [Learn more](#)

## Industry

Leading change by modeling and inspiring progress

**D&I Focused Survey** VHB is a pioneer in promoting DEIB in the industry. Together with the ACEC Design Professionals Coalition, we sponsored the first D&I-oriented survey in the industry in 2018. This established a benchmark for developing D&I programs. Their findings,

examples, and insights on championing DEIB were published in the March 2020 report, [Diversity & Inclusion, Keys to Success & Lessons Learned](#).

**Diversity Roadmap** In 2023, VHB, in collaboration with the ACEC Research Institute and Zweig White, developed and launched the [Diversity Roadmap](#). This DEIB maturity model and benchmarking tool helps engineering firms measure and advance their DEI&B efforts. It provides a structured approach to assess, monitor, and improve DEIB practices, align with industry standards, attract diverse talent, and foster an inclusive, innovative workplace

**Tufts University Racial Equity in Policy & Planning Fellowship Sponsor** This fellowship program empowers graduate students from underrepresented backgrounds by providing them with a curriculum focused on environmental justice in planning.

**Platinum Sponsor of the 2024 Conference on Advancing Transportation Equity (CATE)** The conference bridges the gap between the transportation equity analyses that agencies conduct and conditions on the ground



## Thought Leadership

### ENGINEERING GEORGIA, 2024

*Keri Kocur Shares Insights about VHB culture with Engineering Georgia*

Presenter: Chief People Officer, Keri Kocur

### ACEC WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP FORUM, 2024

*Women's Leadership Forum Presents: Shaping an Inclusive Culture*

Presenter: Chief People Officer, Keri Kocur

### ACEC FALL CONFERENCE, 2023

*Fireside Chat: A Look Inside the Diversity Roadmap*

Panelist: Chief People Officer, Keri Kocur

*Annual Economic Assessment and Industry Forecast*

Moderator: Mike Carragher, President & CEO

### ACEC FALL CONFERENCE, 2023

*Fireside Chat: A Look Inside the Diversity Roadmap*

Presenter: Chief People Officer, Keri Kocur

### EFCG HR EXECUTIVE CONFERENCE, 2023

*DEI: Taking the Next Steps*

Presenter: Chief People Officer, Keri Kocur

### ACEC GEORGIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 2023

*DEIB is Good for Business*

Presenter: Chief People Officer, Keri Kocur

### FIDIC GLOBAL INFRASTRUCTURE CONFERENCE, 2022

*Environmental, Social, Governance Panel*

Presenter: Mike Carragher, President & CEO

### WTS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, 2021

*How to Commit to Being an Active DE&I Partner*

Moderator: Mike Carragher, VHB CEO & President

### EFCG EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, 2021

*Beyond Doing Well, Doing Good*

Panelist: Mike Carragher, VHB CEO & President

### WHITEPAPER, 2021

*Building a Sustainable, Equitable, and Resilient Future*

## DEIB Awards

### 2024 | AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES OF MASSACHUSETTS

*Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Commitment Award*

### 2023 | NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CORPORATE DIRECTORS

*DEI Award Finalist*

### 2023 | ACEC CT DEIB AWARD

*Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging Award*

### 2022 | ACEC NEW YORK

*Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging Award*

### 2021 | WTS BOSTON

*Honorable Ray LaHood Award*

Mike Carragher, VHB CEO & President

### 2021 | AEC ADVISORS' DIVERSITY INDEX TOP FIRMS

*Gender and Gender & Race Combined Index*

## Related News

*VHB Supports Tufts' Racial Equity Policy and Planning Fellowship Program*

*VHB Honored with Inaugural ACEC New York Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging Award*

*VHB Panel Celebrates Women and Inspires Future Generations!*

*CREST Intern Lily Liu Explores a Future Career and Gains Experience at VHB*