



Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility and Belonging Report for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting

September 2024

We are building a better, more inclusive and responsive public service for all communities in our region, growing an OPB staff that reflects those communities, and creating a workplace where our employees of color feel safe, feel seen and can thrive.

OPB's equity journey is continually shared through our website's [equity pages](#).

Our Commitment to Equity, Inclusion and Racial Justice

The word "public" is in our name. For much of OPB's 100-year history, "public" meant providing free and equal access to news, information and programming to people across our region.

Today, it means so much more.

It means OPB has a responsibility to embrace and reflect the diversity of the world, in particular Oregon and southern Washington.

Every person has a unique perspective on both our history and our future. As we chronicle our region, we strive to tell each story with the care, thoroughness and attention to equity it deserves.

We have a responsibility to investigate and confront our region's legacy of and continuing struggles with oppression, marginalization, and systemic racism.

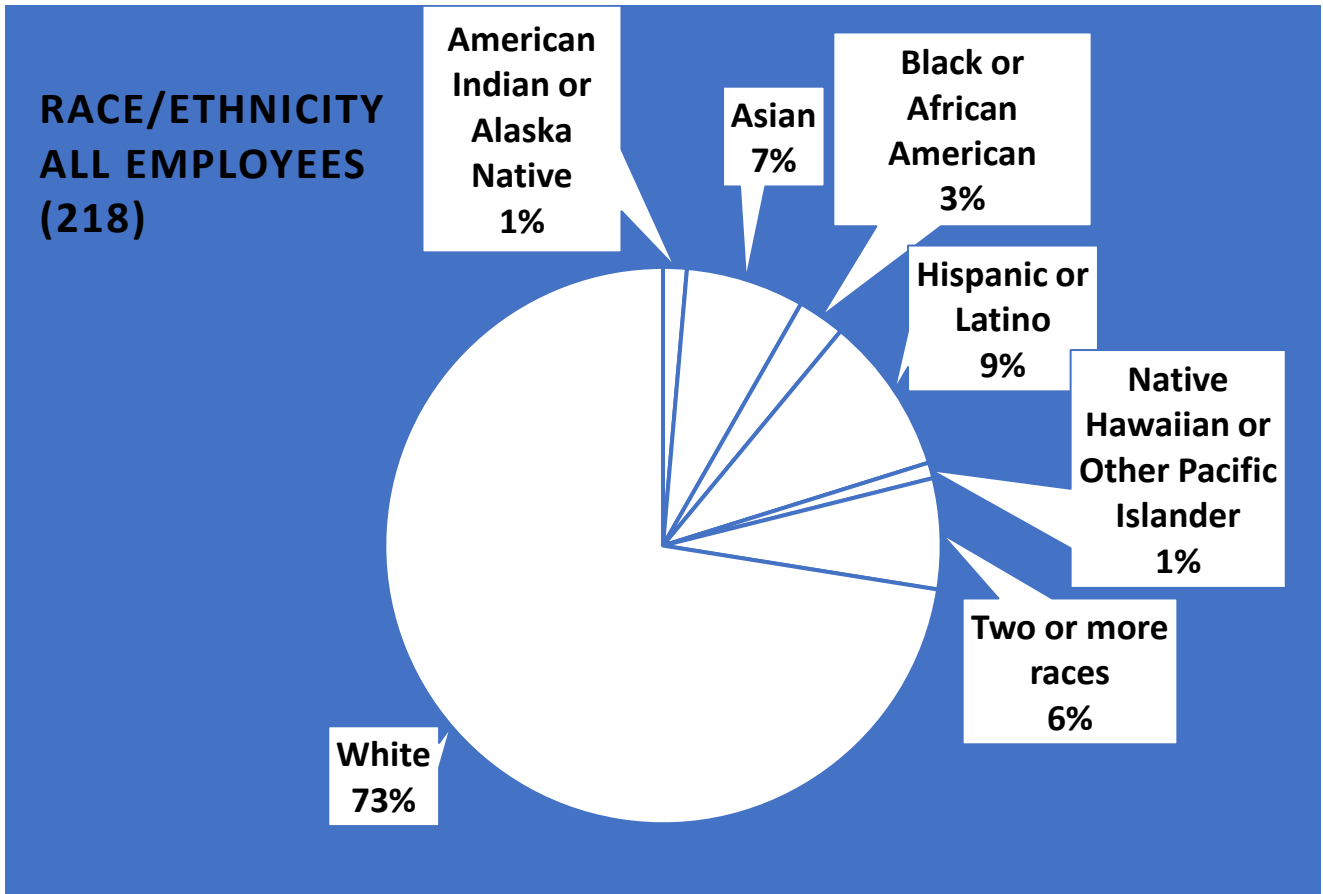
We cannot report the stories of today without recognizing the injustices of the past, because history is alive. It continues to shape this place where we live.

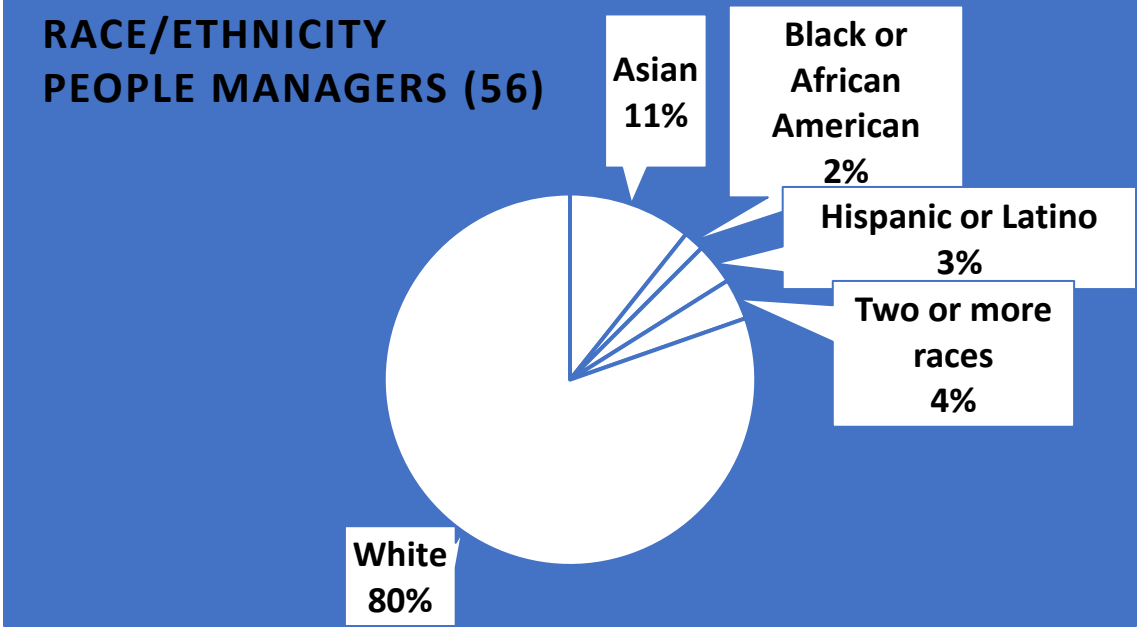
As we work to build a better, more inclusive and responsive public service for everyone in our region, we are also committed to building a better OPB for our employees. We must make equity and inclusion central to everything we do.

We've made mistakes in the past, and we're committed to correcting them. We're listening. We're learning.

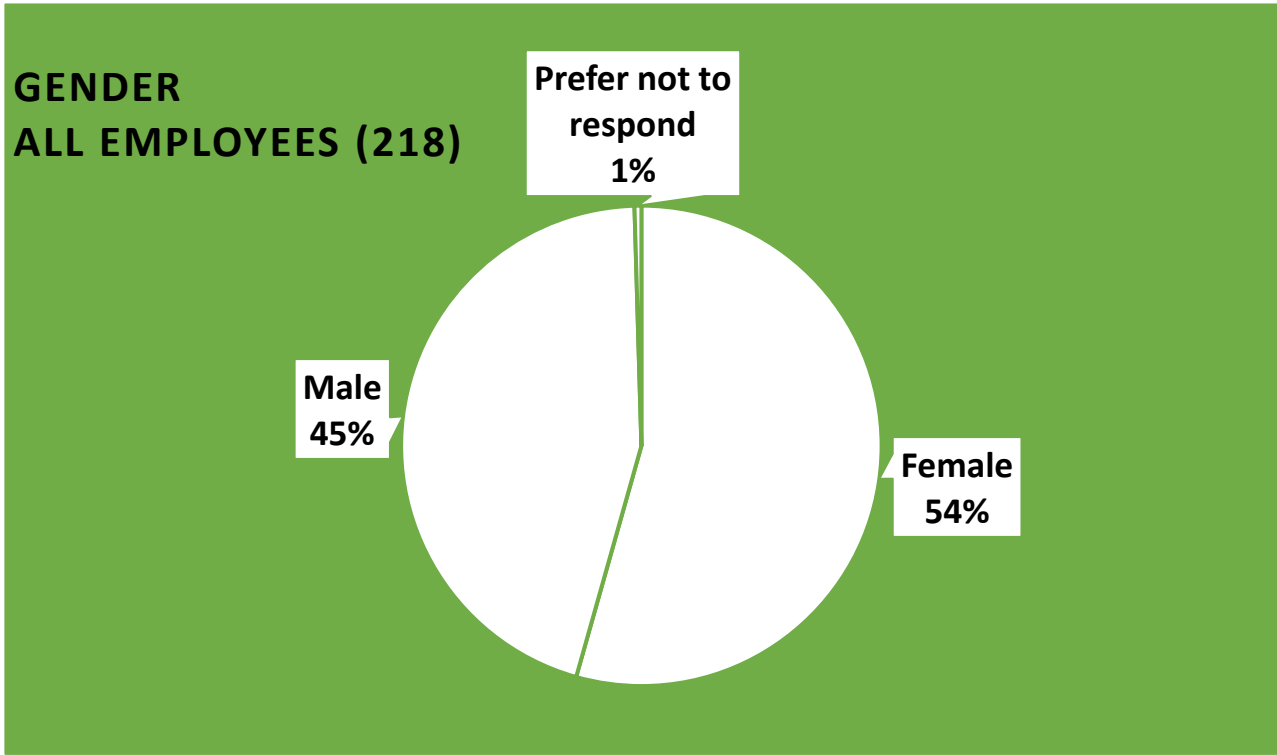
Demographics

We have continued to make steady improvements toward recruiting and maintaining a diverse workforce. Annually, we report the racial and ethnic makeup of OPB’s regular status employees to the EEOC using their required definitions. Below is a high-level capture of that data as of 7/1/24. The graphs display current data, followed by information from the past few years. We are actively working to ensure that our staff reflects the communities we serve. To do this, we are focusing not just on recruitment, but more importantly, on retention.

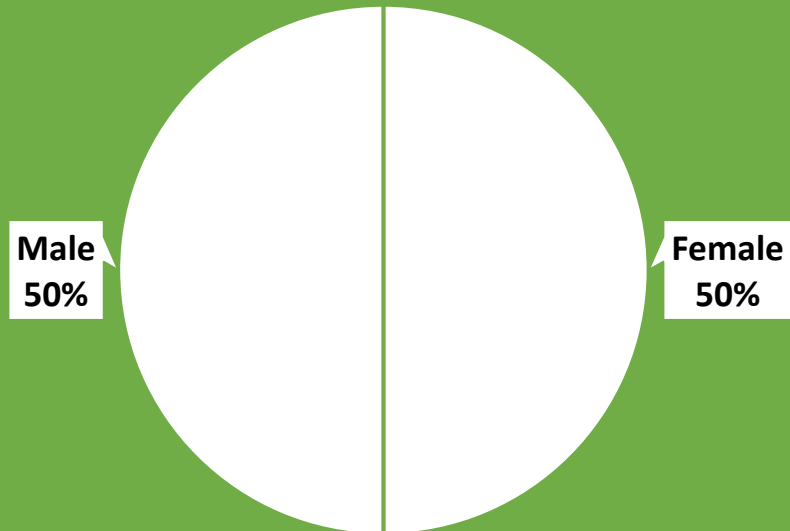




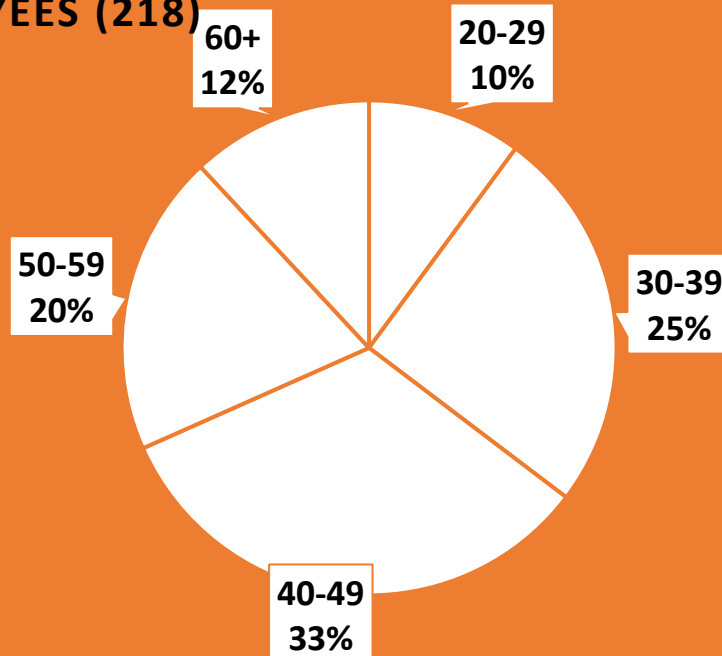
Starting in 2023, OPB employees have been able to select from a drop down that includes: Female, Male, Nonbinary, Transgender, Transgender Woman/Female, Transgender Male, Other, or Prefer Not to Say. Employees are also offered an optional self-identification text box.



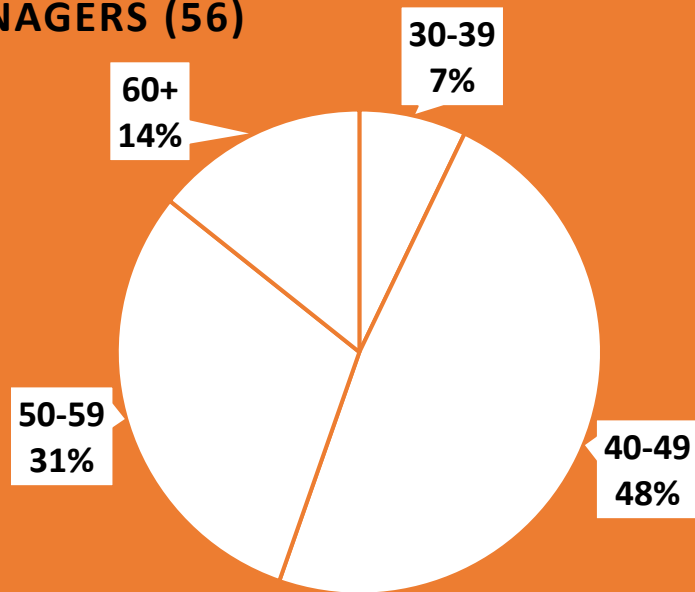
**GENDER
PEOPLE MANAGERS (56)**



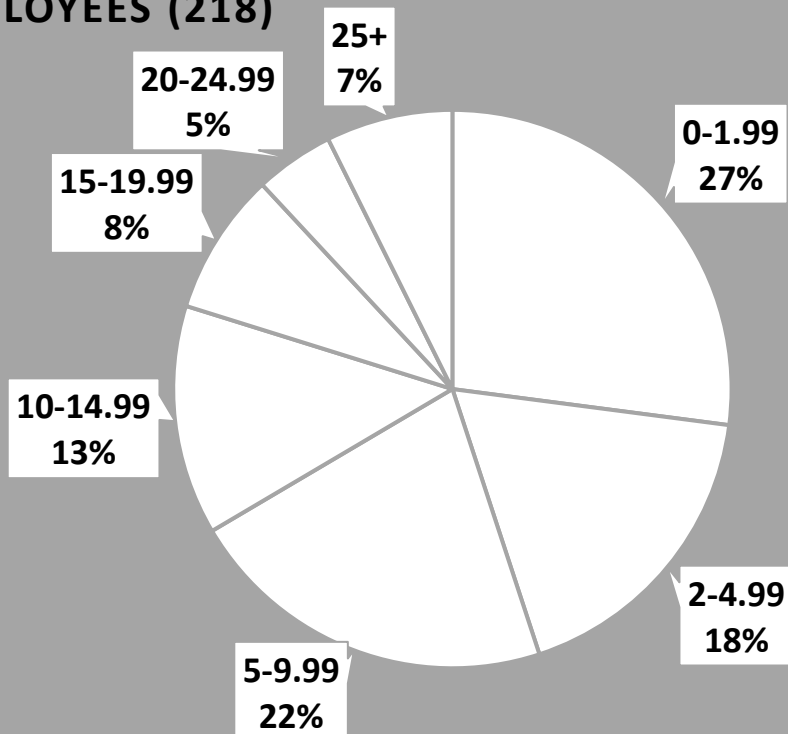
**AGE GROUPS
ALL EMPLOYEES (218)**



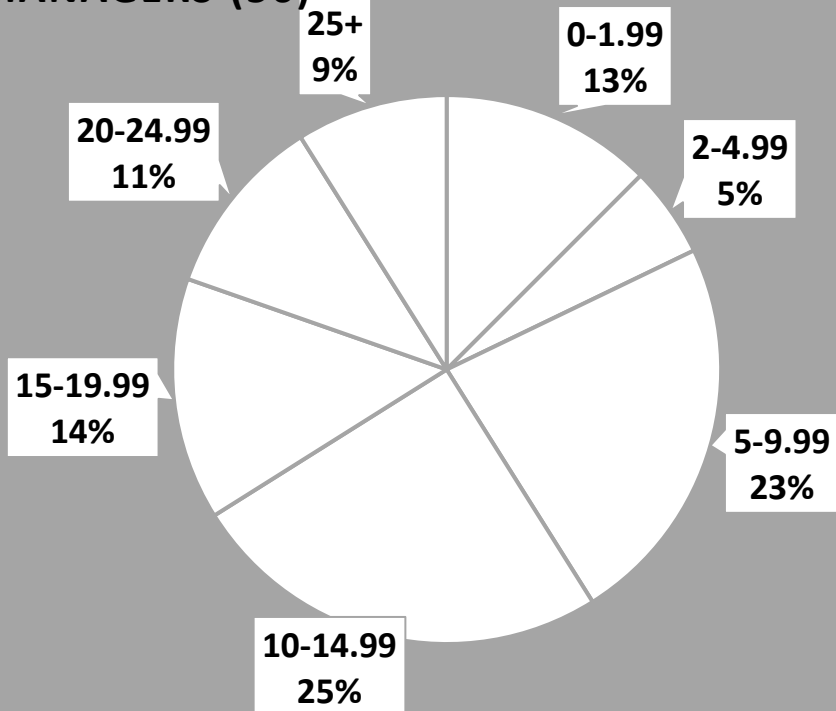
AGE GROUPS PEOPLE MANAGERS (56)



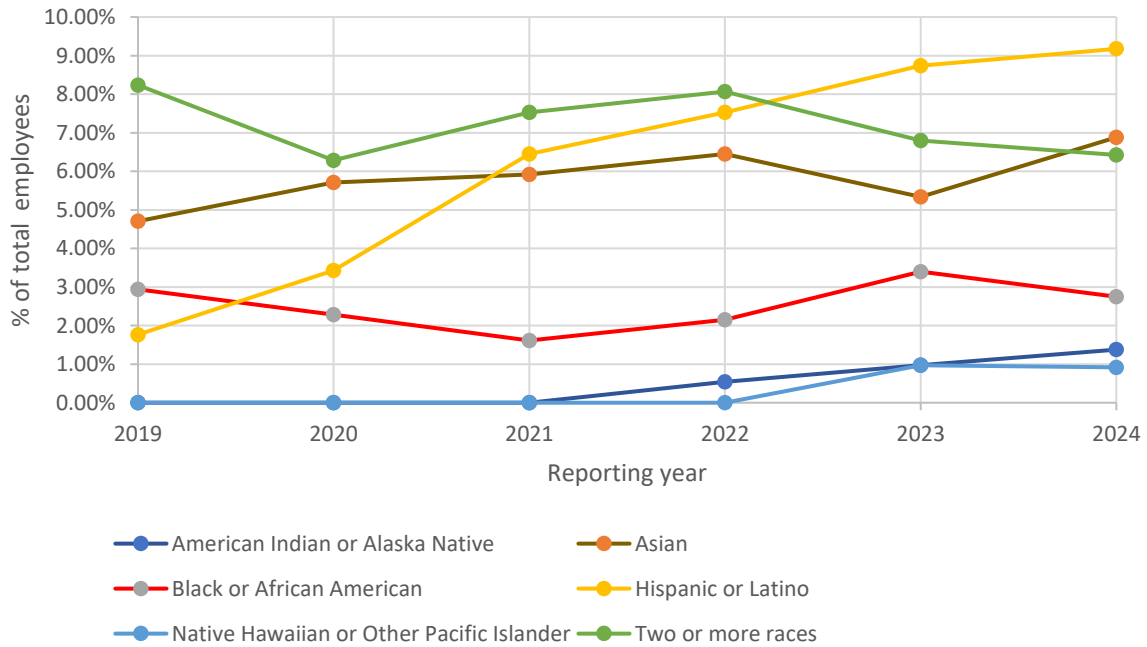
YEARS OF SERVICE ALL EMPLOYEES (218)



YEARS OF SERVICE PEOPLE MANAGERS (56)



% of non-white employees over time



OPB's equity work October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024

Below is a summary of this year's progress and activities, broken into sections: board involvement, senior leadership, Equity Leader, People & Culture team, and working groups and employee resource groups.

Board involvement

- The board successfully completed an inclusive search for OPB's new CEO. The board's Executive Search Committee created an RFP to hire a search firm that embedded OPB's equity work into the process. The committee completed a bias in hiring workshop led by OPB's Equity Leader and VP of People and Culture, and the full board participated in an Inclusive and Equitable Search training session led by the executive search firm. Additionally, the committee and executive search firm created multiple opportunities for feedback and input from OPB staff throughout the process. These included small group conversations with the executive search firm, input into the CEO job spec, and participation in a culture diagnostic survey. There were eight candidates in the pool of finalists, and more than half were women and people of color. All finalists demonstrated a strong commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. OPB's board of directors appointed Rachel Smolkin as OPB's next president and CEO. Ms. Smolkin came to OPB from CNN in Washington, DC., where she was senior vice president of global news for CNN Digital. She joined OPB in early September and we are thrilled to have her at OPB.
- Our community advisory board continued to meet on a quarterly basis to provide feedback to our content teams. We currently have 10 community members on our community advisory board that represent the diversity of the region we serve. They continue to be a vital source of community input and connection for OPB. This summer we will recruit 10 new members.

Senior leadership

- Recognizing that change starts at the top, OPB has continued to invest in resources in executive training and coaching on inclusive practices for the Senior Leadership Group (SLG). This work has been happening with Brevity & Wit, a strategy and design firm that combines human-centered design, the psychology of behavior change, and the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion. This past year, the executive team took a deeper dive into inclusive decision-making. Brevity & Wit trained the SLG on decision-making tools and frameworks to support more inclusive decision-making processes. The SLG have started to introduce some of these tools to their teams, and cross-functional teams are incorporating the tools into their project management structure.
- SLGs also participated in the people manager training that focused on helping managers improve their skills around giving feedback, creating relationships, creating psychological safety on their teams and having regular conversations around professional development and career growth

- The main organization-wide DEIAB initiative that we achieved this past year was completing a set of observable behaviors that translate our values into action (more about this project under the Equity Leader section). We developed a total of 12 observable behaviors: five for all OPB employees, four for managers, and three for the SLG. The SLG is leading the rollout of these observable behaviors to their managers and their departments.

Equity Leader

After her first year at OPB, our equity leader surfaced that a key barrier to diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and belonging at OPB was a low trust environment. A lack of transparency around decision-making, and unclear and inconsistent expectations of managers and leaders contributed to the low trust environment. This past year, OPB's equity leader focused on a project to rebuild trust between staff and leadership. She developed a set of observable behaviors with input from the senior leadership team, managers, and the E-team that translated OPB's organizational values into action. The observable behaviors will help hold all OPB employees accountable to an inclusive and equitable workplace culture. They will also be part of an employee engagement survey that will measure which observable behaviors we do well and where we need improvement.

OPB's equity leader also stewarded a partnership with URL Media, an organization that recruits and develops diverse talent for media organizations. We hired URL Media to partner with our newsroom leadership on recruiting two new editors. We have also partnered with URL Media on piloting a mentorship program for women of color journalists at OPB. URL Media consultants are currently working with four women of color at OPB.

Another achievement from this past year was guiding a new structure for the E-team, OPB's diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility and belonging council. This year the E-team organized around three focus areas: operations, communications, and enrichment. This has been an effective way to distribute the E-team's efforts.

People & Culture

People & Culture (P&C) has spent the last year engaged in dozens of initiatives and projects furthering our diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility and belonging work. They used OPB's equity filters, engaged multiple perspectives and tried to do their work as transparently as possible by conducting surveys, having conversations, and listening sessions.

They built stepping-stones toward transformational changes that will improve the daily and long-term experience of working at OPB, including things like:

- Gathered feedback about and updated our performance reviews process.
- Added a DEIAB question into everyone's review.

Transparency regarding why and how decisions are made contributes to feelings of understanding and belonging. P&C's goal is always to share as much information as possible while dealing with highly sensitive information and issues. This past year, the following projects were undertaken:

- Published an explainer about how the disciplinary and termination process happens
- In partnership with our Equity Leader, launched additional compensation for staff leading DEAI work.
- Published the second demographic and arrival/departure report to staff.
- Launched an ongoing Behind the Scenes with P&C series where we discussed:
 - Hiring processes
 - Volunteer programs
 - Had a facilitated conversation with our health care insurance provider

Feelings of connection and belonging are critical to all employees feeling psychologically safe at OPB. P&C has led work in this area including:

- Continued to engage people managers in training that focused on helping managers improve their skills around giving feedback, creating relationships, creating psychological safety on their teams and having regular conversations around professional development and career growth
- Sought input which resulted in departments hosting their own winter gatherings (instead of an organization-wide one) so teams could spend some fun time together.
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The People & Culture team advocated for decisions and priorities that seek to center our employees who have less power.

- OPB provided a stipend to staff most impacted by the PPS strike in the late fall of 2023.
- OPB absorbed almost all of our carrier's health insurance premium increases for the second year in a row.

Internships and Recruiting

The People & Culture team has worked to constantly improve all of our recruiting and hiring processes, including our anti-bias training for hiring panels and our onboarding experience to help staff feel like they belong at OPB.

Internships

For the summer of 2024 we hosted four paid interns in our Content department for a 10-week summer program. The students were in the following internships: [Charles Snowden Program for Excellence in Journalism Internship](#), [Maynard E. Orme Internship](#), [Jon R. Tuttle Journalism and Production Diversity Internship](#) and [Internship for Emerging Journalists](#). They were from the: University of Oregon (2), Washington University in St. Louis and Scripps College.

People & Culture and OPB's Training Editor worked closely to build a curriculum centered on teaching relevant skills for today's media landscape. In addition to their daily responsibilities, they engaged in weekly training sessions that cover a broad range of storytelling forms and tools. Internship managers provided interns with opportunities to produce their own work across multiple platforms and ensured that there was ample opportunity to shadow veteran journalists in the field. Through this program OPB interns were also able to learn more about opportunities in public media and foster relationships with each other.

We continue to host paid legal externs from the following law schools: University of Oregon, Lewis & Clark College and Willamette University. In the past year, we've hosted 6 legal externs.

Recruiting

In addition to what was mentioned above about the continuous improvement of our recruitment practices, we also attended several conferences and recruiting events.

OPB joined NPR and two dozen other public media organizations from across the country as part of the ongoing nationwide public media recruiting efforts called Think Public Media. OPB's People and Culture Representatives along with journalists and editors attended the following conferences as part of our recruitment efforts:

- NAHJ - National Association of Hispanic Journalists – July 9-13
- AAJA - Asian American Journalists Association – August 7-10
- NLGJA Association of LGBTQ+ Journalists – September 5 - 7

OPB People & Culture Generalist in collaboration with staff representatives from NPR, MPR and KQED attended and participated in recruitment efforts at the Indigenous Media Conference July 25-27, 2024.

OPB's People & Culture Generalists as well as other OPB reporters and editors, some of which participated in conference panels, attended Building a Better Journalist conference hosted by SPJ Pro Chapter and the AAJA Portland Chapter was attended on October 28, 2023.

OPB People and Culture representatives tabled at the following local events and job fairs:

- University Of Oregon Fall Career & Internship Expo on October 18, 2023
- Oregon State University School of Communication Career Fair on November 1, 2023

Next Generation Radio

OPB hosted [Next Generation Radio](#), and several of our journalists served as mentors. Next Gen Radio is a five-day audio-focused, digital journalism project. The program is designed to give competitively selected participants the opportunity to learn how to report and produce a non-narrated audio piece and a companion multimedia story. Those chosen for the program are paired with a professional journalist who serves as their mentor for the week. The chosen participants are paid a stipend for their work.

Working Groups and Employee Resource Groups

This year we introduced a new structure for organizing our employee-led DEIAB groups. We now categorize these groups as either affinity groups or Employee Resource Groups (ERGs). Employee Resource Groups are more formal than affinity groups, and they must meet certain requirements. All members of Employee Resource Groups now receive quarterly payments for their involvement. Leaders of affinity groups are similarly compensated as well. Compensating employees who are advancing OPB's DEIAB efforts was a significant achievement for our organization this year.

Equity Team (E-Team)

- Eleven new E-team members joined the group in January 2024, bringing the E-team to 18 active members. They formed working groups focused on: **Operations, Communications, and Education/Enrichment**
 - The Communications Working Group developed a quarterly newsletter called the DEIAB digest, which includes updates from all DEIAB groups at OPB and news about OPB in the community.
 - The Operations Working Group has been working toward creating structures and processes for feedback on equity issues.
 - The Equity Enrichment Working Group is working on ways to integrate and develop more DEIAB learnings and opportunities to share with the whole organization.

DEI Content Committee activities

- The DEICC has continued offering voluntary content reviews for drafts or story plans by OPB content creators and reviewed work in the written, audio and visual mediums.
- This year, they hosted three sessions in the committee's ongoing guest speaker series. While these sessions are primarily focused on journalism, they are open to all staff, not just content employees.
 - April 2024: Featured Portland-based photographer and Portland in Color founder Celeste Noche for a conversation about diversity and representation in visual media.
 - May 2024: Featured Kristin Gilger from the National Center on Disability and Journalism, and Joseph Shapiro from NPR for a session about covering people with disabilities.
 - June 2024: Featured Megan Black Johnson from the Western States Center for a talk about understanding antisemitism.
- The DEICC will be helping plan and facilitate the next DEI Content Town Hall scheduled for November 20th

The committee completed an internal Sharepoint site. It includes a collection of DEI-related style guides, reporting resources and diverse source databases; a page with pronunciation guides and instructions for how to write and/or find pronouncers for broadcast; and more.

White Anti-Racist Learning Group

The white learning group is for staff to work explicitly and intentionally together on understanding white culture and white privilege and to increase critical analysis around these concepts.

- Lisa Meersman, a racial equity trainer who specializes in working with white learning groups, led three sessions for this group that continued building on previous sessions about micro aggressions and allyship

BIPOC Affinity Group

The BIPOC affinity group is a communal space for OPB BIPOC staff to gather and be in community.

- The group has two meetings per month, which include a monthly virtual check-in and a monthly in-person gathering.
- They provided expertise and perspective to the Hyams committee (OPB's Language Advisory Committee) and have attended various community events on behalf of OPB.

Black Folks at OPB

Formed in 2023, the vision for this group is to be a supportive and safe space for Black people working at OPB, and a driver to infuse Black culture into OPB's work in an authentic way. It is a space to shift the focus from the pain of communities of color to the celebration and joy of Black culture and extend that celebration to OPB employees at large.

- This group holds in person gatherings monthly.
- They created an internal website to educate OPB staff about Juneteenth.
- They reviewed an Oregon Experience short documentary about Oregon's history of racism

Disability Affinity Group

- Earlier this year, we formed an employee affinity group for individuals with both visible and invisible disabilities, including caregivers. The group was formed to create opportunities for support and community, learning, and advocacy, while leveraging our collective expertise in support of OPB's DEIAB goals.
- The group is inclusive of individuals with disabilities who are exploring their disability identity, acknowledging that choosing to identify as disabled is a personal decision and one that may ebb and flow over our lives.

- Since last spring, they have been working to establish the group's agreements and priorities, connecting through a private Slack channel and meeting bimonthly on Zoom.

Jewish Affinity Group

- This is a new affinity group that formed in the fall of 2023. It is a place where folks at OPB who identify as Jewish can chat, share stories, celebrate our culture, connect and just be Jewish. They have raised awareness about events and issues that impact Jewish staff and attended events in the Jewish community as a group.

Latinidad Affinity Group

- This is a new affinity group that also formed in the fall of 2023. It is a space where OPB staff who identify as Latino/a/e/x can join for support, share events, fun stories, raise concerns, celebrate the diversity and explore the complexities of Latinidad in the US with a focus on solidarity.
- There are currently 18 people in our Slack channel and there have been two meet-ups at Latino-owned establishments.
- This group provided feedback to a page in our online elections hub that was translated into Spanish. They are also starting to explore hosting a Spanish conversation club for all OPB employees.

LGBTQIA2s+ queer questioning and fierce affinity group

- Formed in 2022, the vision for this group is to be a supportive and safe space for lgbtqia2s+ queer and questioning people working at OPB, and a driver to infuse our culture into OPB in an authentic way. It is a space to focus on the celebration and joy of queer culture and extend that celebration to all OPB employees.
- The group flew a pride flag at OPB's Portland headquarters for the month of June to celebrate pride month. The group participated and marched in the Portland Pride parade for the first time in OPB's history with 40 group members, work allies and friends and families.