



Massachusetts Neuropsychological Society
Diversity Initiative Vision Statement
April 2013

I. VISION

The term "diversity" encompasses differences of culture, background and experience among individuals and groups. Such differences include, but are not limited to, differences of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, and disabilities, as well as political and religious affiliation and socioeconomic status.

The Massachusetts Neuropsychological Society (MNS) recognizes that if Neuropsychology is to remain relevant as a profession dedicated to understanding brain-behavior relationships in education/training, healthcare, and forensic arenas, greater emphasis must be placed on research, training, and ongoing professional development furthering our understanding the role of culture and diversity in neuropsychological assessment and cognitive function. For example, by 2020 individuals of diverse ethnic background will represent more than half the population of the United States.

As the proportion of individuals of diverse backgrounds increases in the population, the practice of "referring out" assessments of individuals whose ethnic/ cultural or other backgrounds are different from the assessing neuropsychologist will be impractical and result in an untenable backload for culturally fluent neuropsychologists. Academic settings will need to prepare the next generation of neuropsychologists to be competent in this new population context. Understanding the international scope of neuropsychology within the worldwide diversity of brain-behavior science and application, we are left with the fact we cannot remain in isolated academic communities or professional organizations. Our intention is to be inclusive, improve access, reduce barriers, and decrease deficits of knowledge while increasing awareness and competency.

II. DIVERSITY INITIATIVE

Therefore, MNS has created a Diversity Initiative. A Diversity Committee has been designed to be central to the MNS leadership structure, consisting of members of the MNS BOD executive committee, one student representative, and any other interested MNS member. The vision/ goals of the initiative are to:

1. Support all MNS members in becoming culturally competent practitioners by raising awareness of this issue and providing resources that will support growth in this area. Where resources are not available, MNS will support their production.
 2. Create a dynamic and evolving web resource center for diversity on the MNS website, including links to resources and materials.
 3. Ensure that every invited CE speaker is asked to address diversity. Options to do so: discuss applications of the research or clinical work presented to diverse populations; present a talk in which application to diverse populations is inherent in the topic and work presented; or comment on potential avenues for research or clinical work that would address application to diverse populations, if the speaker's work and expertise do not extend to diverse populations.
 4. Encourage focus on Diversity in our scientific activities (including the Science Symposium, by creating a diversity research award for the poster sessions).
 5. Increase the number of neuropsychologists of diverse cultural, ethnic, or other backgrounds in our membership.
 6. Increase the number of neuropsychologists of diverse cultural, ethnic, or other backgrounds in our leadership pipeline including the BOD.
 7. Increase the number of students of diverse background in our membership and leadership roles within MNS.
 8. Increase training opportunities for students interested in the clinical practice and/or research of cultural neuropsychology through conjoint efforts of the Diversity Committee and Trainee/Mentorship Program.
 9. Develop materials and make existing resources more available, visible and accessible to assist neuropsychologists in academic settings to prepare the next generation of students.
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