

*Engaging the Division of Student  
Affairs to Advance an Inclusive and  
Welcoming Campus Climate*

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Presented & Facilitated by:

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Diversity Strategies in Action (DSA 2.0) Committee Members

**Objectives**

**(1) Overview of the University Diversity Plan**

Address what Texas A&M is accomplishing and learning from the University Diversity Plan and help the Division of Student Affairs move forward to address challenges and opportunities for the future

**(2) Engaging the Data**

Describe the major themes, challenges, and opportunities evident from the data from Division of Student Affairs (DSA) staff climate survey administered in December, 2011

**(3) Engaging the Division of Student Affairs**

Engage DSA staff in discussions about funding programs, services, and staff development opportunities to advance an inclusive and welcoming campus climate for all staff, students, and community members

## Engaging the Division

Where, how, what would be the best bang for the buck to advance an inclusive and welcoming campus climate in the Division of Student Affairs for all staff, students, and community members?

- ❖ Seated in groups assigned by month of birth
- ❖ Role of DSA 2.0 facilitators
- ❖ Introductions
- ❖ Ground rules for safe discussion
- ❖ Note-taking
- ❖ Reporting back to large group

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## Overview of the Data: *DSA Staff Climate – Fall 2011 Survey*

### Survey Method

- Web-based climate assessment
- Distributed December 2011 to DSA full-time staff
- Recruited by emails sent to their DSA email accounts
- Participation was voluntary - no incentives were used
- 401 out of 818 (49%) DSA staff responded to the survey

### Confidentiality & Data Analysis

- Division-level analysis: No department-level analysis
- No links between name, email, department and responses
- No comments reported with department or demographic information
- No analysis for groups with less than 20 people
- Content analysis restricted to three DSA staff

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## Demographics: *Confidentiality*

Do you identify yourself as a member of a historically underrepresented group at Texas A&M University? Examples include but are not limited to:

- Age
- Gender
- Religious preference/spiritual belief
- Sexual orientation
- Citizenship
- Race/ethnicity
- Where you are from
- Disability status

*I identify myself as a white female. Although it has been underrepresented at A&M, I still think I have privilege.* [No - Historically underrepresented]

*In addition to my race, I would offer that as someone who does not identify as a Republican or agree with all perceived notions of conservatism, I can also be underrepresented or isolated because of the ideological views of others.* [Yes - Historically underrepresented]

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## Major Themes of the *DSA Staff Climate - Fall 2011 Survey*

### 1. Characteristics of an Inclusive Environment

- Do DSA staff that responded to the survey feel valued?
- Do DSA marketing materials reflect a commitment to diversity?

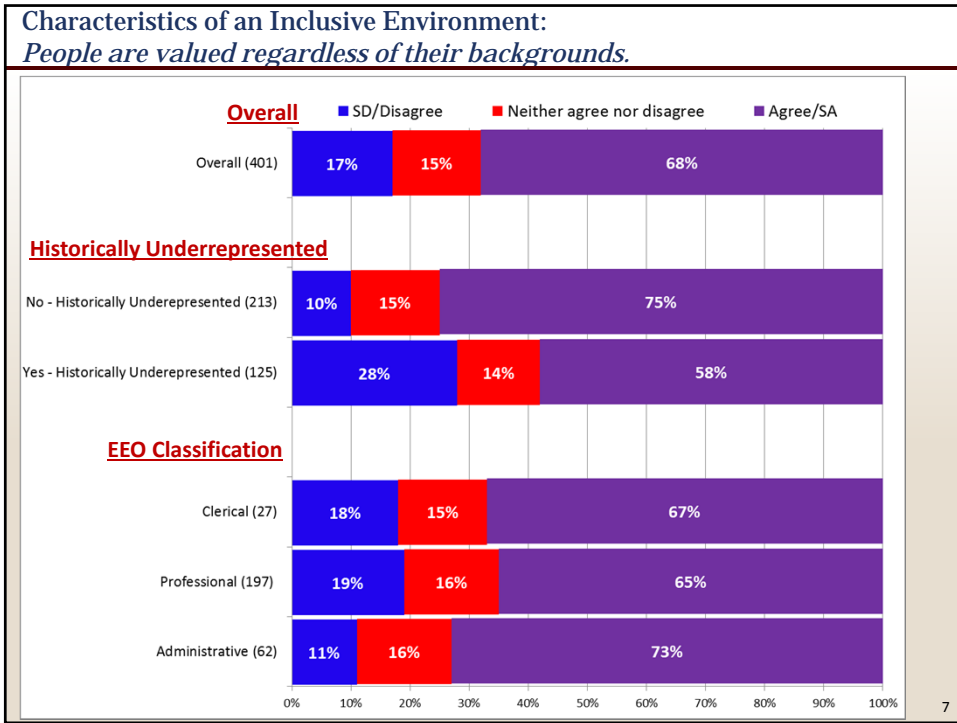
### 2. Perceptions of a Less-Than-Welcoming Environment

- Do DSA staff feel like they fit in at Texas A&M?
- Beyond workloads, how stressful is the Texas A&M environment for DSA staff?

### 3. Staff Development and Retention

- Do DSA staff feel encouraged to develop their job knowledge and skills?
- Do DSA staff worry about losing their jobs?

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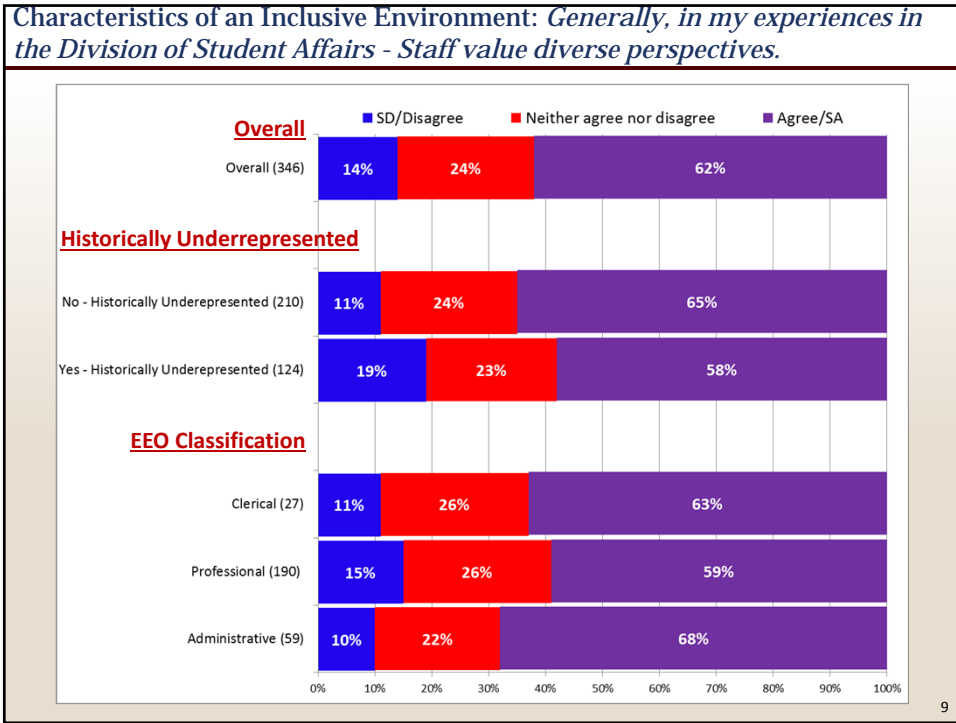


**Characteristics of an Inclusive Environment:**  
*People are valued regardless of their backgrounds.*

*This school is incredibly welcoming to white, heterosexual Christians. If you don't fit those categories, you don't fit in and people are quick to tell you that. [Yes - Historically underrepresented]*

*Texas A&M is still a very conservative campus, which I appreciate. Unfortunately it can be a closed minded conservatism, with vocal disparaging of those that are "different" – homosexuals, non-Christian religions, immigrants, etc. [No - Historically underrepresented]*

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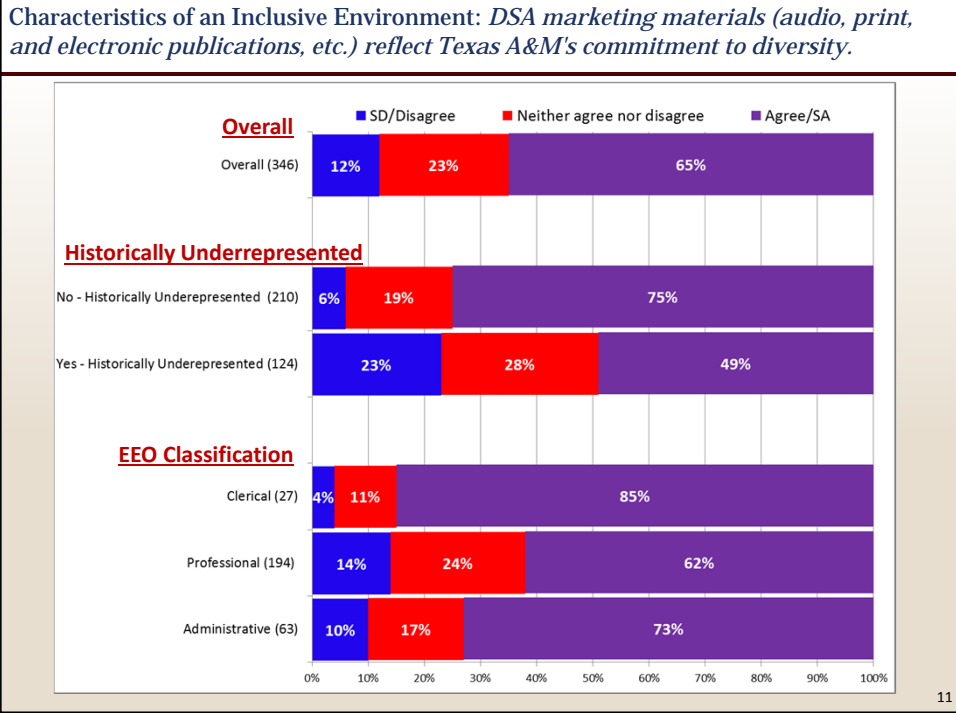


**Characteristics of an Inclusive Environment: *In my experiences in the Division of Student Affairs - Staff value diverse perspectives...***

*I think staff don't even know what it means to be committed to diversity. Few staff believe diversity is more than just race. We have a huge problem on this campus when students of difference are not supported. The best example is when undocumented students and GLBT students were attacked last year and our division did nothing to make a PUBLIC statement that we stand behind these students and the offices that work for them. [Yes - Historically underrepresented]*

*Generally speaking I believe we have a lot of statements that reflect valuing diversity. I think there may be a need to find ways to put those values into action. [Yes - Historically underrepresented]*

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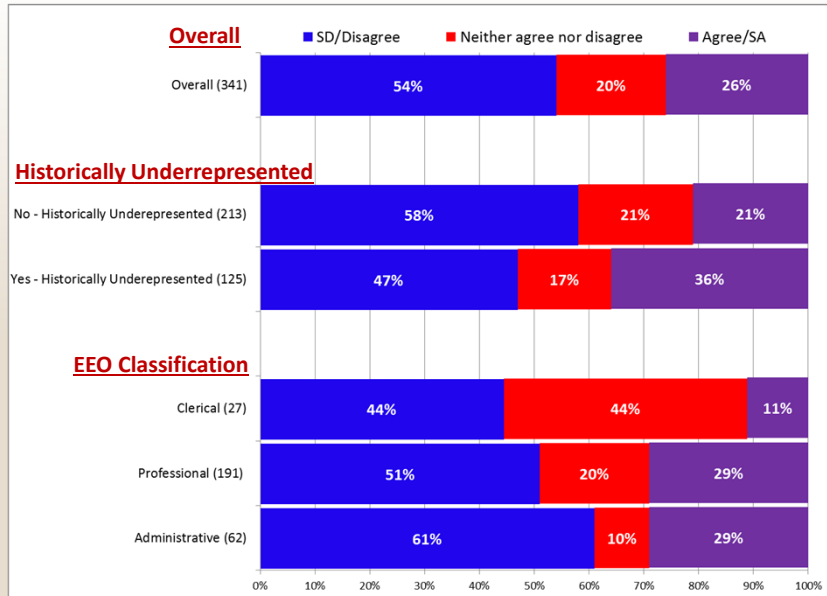
Characteristics of an Inclusive Environment: *DSA marketing materials (audio, print, and electronic publications, etc.) reflect Texas A&M's commitment to diversity...*

*Electronic media should be made more accessible to the hearing and visually impaired. I also feel like most publications still represent predominately white, traditional age, non-disabled students. [No - Historically underrepresented]*

*Marketing, publications and job postings can reflect a commitment to diversity but aren't reality. What members of the A&M community do and say reflect the true nature of acceptance and celebration of diversity. So you can say that we put on a good front but beyond that, I'm not so sure. [No - Historically underrepresented]*

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*Perceptions of a less than welcoming environment: Generally, I feel the need to minimize various characteristics of my identity (e.g., language, dress, beliefs, etc.) to fit in in the DSA.*



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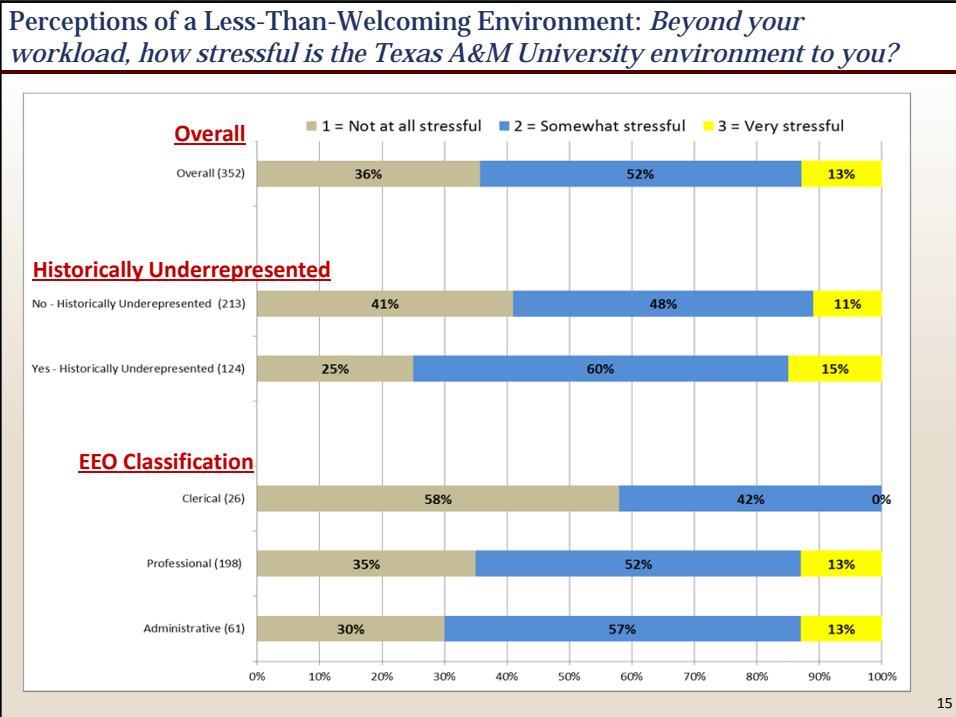
*Perceptions of a less than welcoming environment: Generally, I feel the need to minimize various characteristics of my identity (e.g., language, dress, beliefs, etc.) to fit in in the DSA...*

*My workplace, in the DSA, is really the only welcoming environment I've encountered on campus.* [Yes - Historically underrepresented]

*I either minimize or do not openly reveal my lack of religious beliefs.* [No - Historically underrepresented]

*I don't feel a need to minimize my identity; but do feel a need to minimize my thoughts of various social issues and equality such as GLBT Issues, Gender discrimination, etc. that I see on this campus. I'm comfortable talking about these with people in my department and close colleagues across the division; but not publicly across the university.* [No - Historically underrepresented]

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**Perceptions of a Less-Than-Welcoming Environment: *Beyond your workload, how stressful is the Texas A&M University environment to you?***

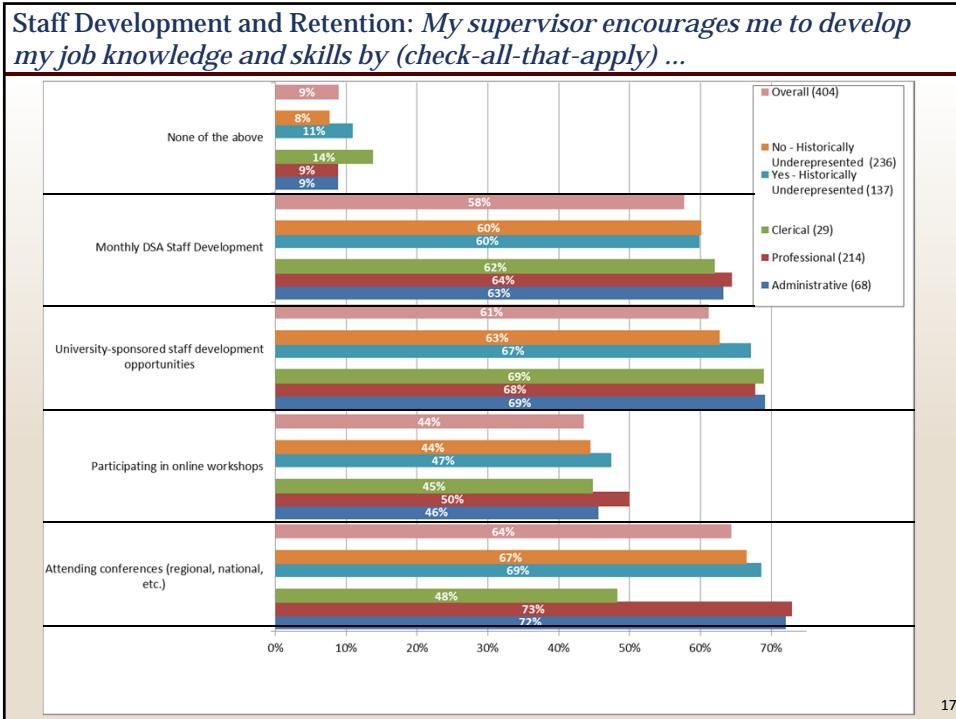
*The stressful aspects of A&M have been budget cuts, lack of raises or merits, and concerns over losing position since other areas have been cut and staff have lost positions (at A&M, not within the division). [No - Historically underrepresented]*

*Financial problems for the state as a whole make all employees a little nervous. [No - Historically underrepresented]*

\*\*\* Identifying information was deleted to protect confidentiality.

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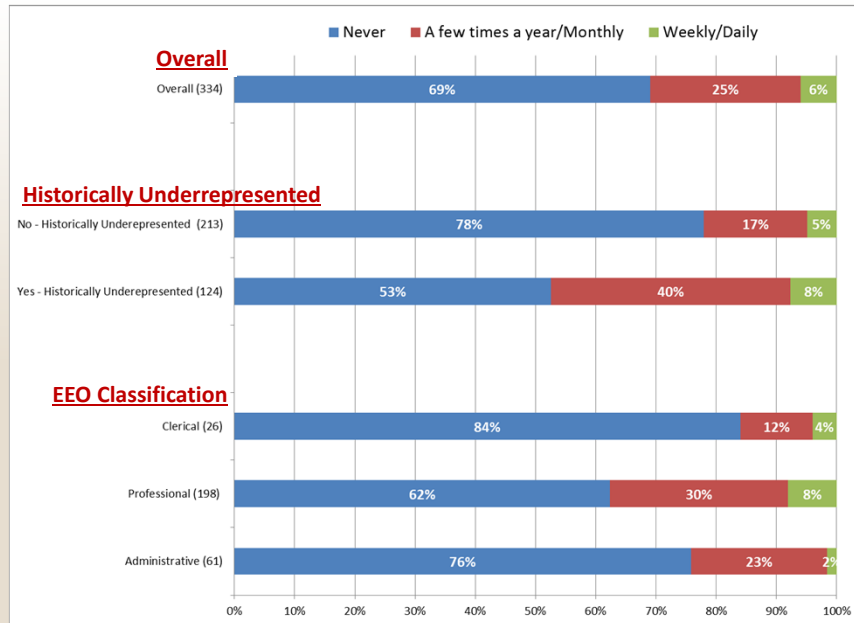
**Staff Development and Retention: My supervisor encourages me to develop my job knowledge and skills by ... (checking all that apply) ...**

*Although we are not excluded from attending ... , a lot of it has to do with funding. The funding is used for higher-ups to attend conferences, whereas the secretarial staff is encouraged to attend the free. DSA staff development does not always develop job skills, they are interesting, but not always focused to helping us enhancing our job duties. [Yes - Historically underrepresented]*

*I feel blessed that my supervisor is very supportive of any and all endeavors that I want to pursue towards professional development. [Yes - Historically underrepresented]*

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Staff Development and Retention: In the last year, how often have you – *Thought about quitting your job because of a less-than-welcoming environment Texas A&M in general?*



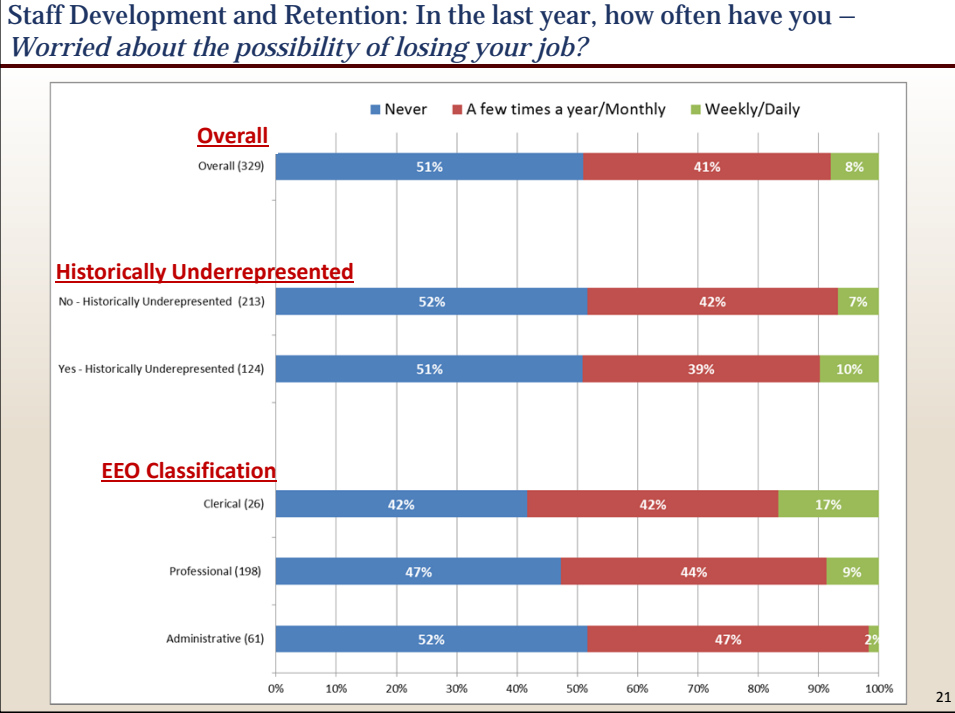
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Staff Development and Retention: In the last year, how often have you – *Thought about quitting your job because of a less-than-welcoming environment Texas A&M in general?*

*The stress of the negative environment was more prevalent in the first two years of being at A&M. There have been times when I have looked for a job outside of the institution on a more regular basis. Over time I have adapted to the climate to an extent and little by little stop fighting so hard for what I believe is right because it is exhausting.* [Yes - Historically underrepresented]

*I am very thankful for the job that I hold at Texas A&M University, but I do not feel that there is any possibility for upward mobility for me. I love the students that I work with, and many of my coworkers make Texas A&M a place I am proud to be affiliated with. \*\*\* the microaggressions I experience build up over time, and I do have concerns that my job isn't highly valued by the administration. I do not necessarily WANT to leave Texas A&M University, however, if I do not have opportunities to move up the chain and make professional progress, I will eventually be forced to move on.* [Yes - Historically underrepresented]

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**Staff Development and Retention: Do staff worry about losing their jobs?**

*I am not a worrier or job-hopper. I don't mind a little stress...it's gonna happen anywhere you work. I have good stress-relief mechanisms in place and rarely let something overly-upset me. I am, in general, happy working at A&M and enjoy the job I do. My concerns about the possibility of losing my job have to do with the economy and budget reductions and consolidation initiatives campus-wide. They have nothing to do with discriminatory issues. [No - Historically underrepresented]*

**Summary: *DSA Plans for Engaging the Data & Strategic Plan***

- Assess staff familiarity and confidence in institutional procedures for reporting incivility, harassment, and/or ethical issues (climate data)
- Enhance access to professional development to educate/train staff on diversity, social justice, and inclusivity (DSA 2.0 charge, climate data)
- Identify the barriers to creating an inclusive campus (DSA strategic plan, climate data)
- Assess traditions and impact on inclusivity (DSA strategic plan, climate data)
- Recognize the contributions of diverse Aggies through the aesthetic environments on campus (DSA strategic plan, climate data)
- Examine salary equity by gender and race across positions within the DSA (DSA 2.0 charge, climate data)
- Train DSA staff on best practices for recruiting and hiring from a diverse applicant pool (DSA 2.0 charge, climate data)