



APPA Members,

As leaders in the pet care community, we recognize the importance of standing with and supporting all people and communities. As an international association, APPA has an obligation to welcome, understand, and better serve the diverse cultures and backgrounds that are represented by our members and those who attend our events. While we all come from different backgrounds and experiences, we share a common bond over our love of pets. We want to leverage this to pave a path forward that embraces unity, equality, and diversity within the pet care community and promote the same love and compassion our pets show us every day. Our pets love us no matter who we are, and we want to encourage everyone to embrace that same sentiment as we begin this journey within the pet care community.

As part of our commitment, APPA has partnered with Dr. Nika White of [Nika White Consulting](#) (NWC), a management consulting firm with nationally recognized authority on strategic diversity and intentional inclusion, to serve as a process facilitator for our DEI work. NWC will begin by conducting an organizational assessment to gather intel that will inform a comprehensive, data-driven strategy to promote DEI organizationally throughout all areas of operation.

We know that to begin this journey with our members and our community, we must first lead by example and with authenticity. These last few weeks, APPA has begun its own internal, cultural readiness assessment to level set and identify our own gaps as a business and inform us where change needs to begin. Over these next couple of months, we will also be looking to our members to guide us through the next steps in this Assessment. Through data-driven surveys and focus groups, this process will gather comprehensive quantitative and qualitative data that will be used to develop a DEI strategic plan.

APPA is also offering members a free, two-part DEI Foundational Training course that discusses the essentials of intentional inclusion leadership as paramount to successful organizations and equip participants to build their inclusion leadership competency through knowledge and skills-based training. APPA's staff will be participating in these course modules alongside members.

We embark on this DEI journey with intention and authenticity and understand the importance of our leadership obligations. We look forward to having you along on this journey.

Sincerely,

Steve King
President & CEO