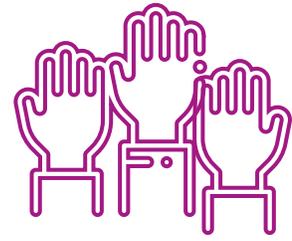


# CRITICAL ISSUE H: INCLUSIVENESS



**Initiative 1:** Make it an organizational priority to recruit, select, and promote members who reflect the demographic makeup of the community they serve.

**Strategies:**

1. Remove economic barriers to candidates desiring to participate in the fire and emergency services.
2. Remove social barriers to candidates desiring to participate in the fire and emergency services.
3. Remove non-validated physical ability barriers for candidates desiring to participate in the fire and emergency services.
4. Create pathways to attract, prepare, and hire underrepresented personnel into the fire and emergency services.
5. Establish an agency goal for the optimal demographic make-up of the agency.
6. Develop a plan to achieve that optimal goal for the agency within a specified time period.

**Initiative 2:** Understand the community characteristics, culture, and diversity that exist and determine the most appropriate way to serve and interact with all community members.

**Strategies:**

1. Provide opportunities for employees to engage with various community groups.
2. Promote cultural understanding and humility within the workforce to increase the quality of interactions and the services provided to the community.
3. Engage the community in helping to develop cultural humility within the agency.
4. Involve the community in agency decisions that affect them.

## Case Study: Hartford Fire Department (HFD)

Location: Hartford, CT

Coverage Area: 124,000 residents over 17 square miles

No. of Employees: 361

Annual Calls for Service: 30,000

A majority-minority community, Hartford's residents are 44 percent Hispanic, 35 percent African American, 15 percent White, and 3 percent Asian. Striving to be a more inclusive fire department to better serve their diverse community, HFD has adopted strategies focused on enhanced two-way communication, team building, and fostering a department identity while permitting individuality. Meetings with all affinity groups allowed the chief to discuss challenge and concerns. These groups included the Emerald Society (Irish), Latin Society of Firefighters (Latino/Hispanic), Phoenix Society (African American), St. Florian Society (Italian), and Women in Fire & Emergency Services. Wide department representation on health and safety, strategic planning, and apparatus committees along with involvement of members in the development of HFD's first professional development program led to a greater sense of inclusion. Custom-designed company logos are permitted on apparatus while intra-mural activities bring together the entire department.

