

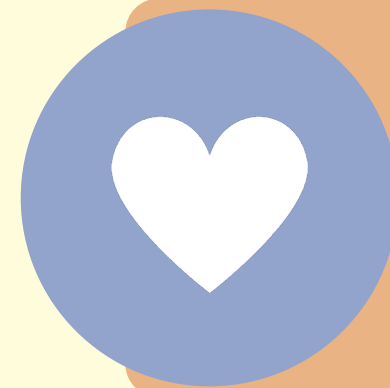
# ABOUT ME AND WHY I 'M HERE



- Michael Gamez (he/him)
- Married
- 5 y.o Frenchie, Hamburger
- Manager, Equity Inclusion & Diversity at VCA Animal Hospitals
- Raised in Central Valley, CA
- Former college educator
- Love to bake/cook



# CREATING A CULTURE OF INCLUSION



Michael Gamez, M.S.  
Manager, Equity Inclusion & Diversity  
VCA Animal Hospitals

# WHAT WE'LL COVER TODAY

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Basics

The Building Blocks for Inclusion

Common Roadblocks to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Your Role - Acts of Inclusion



# DURING OUR TIME TOGETHER



Ask  
questions.

01

Be curious.

02

Commit.

03

# WHAT IS DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION?

Diversity  
Asks

Who is in the room?

Equity Asks

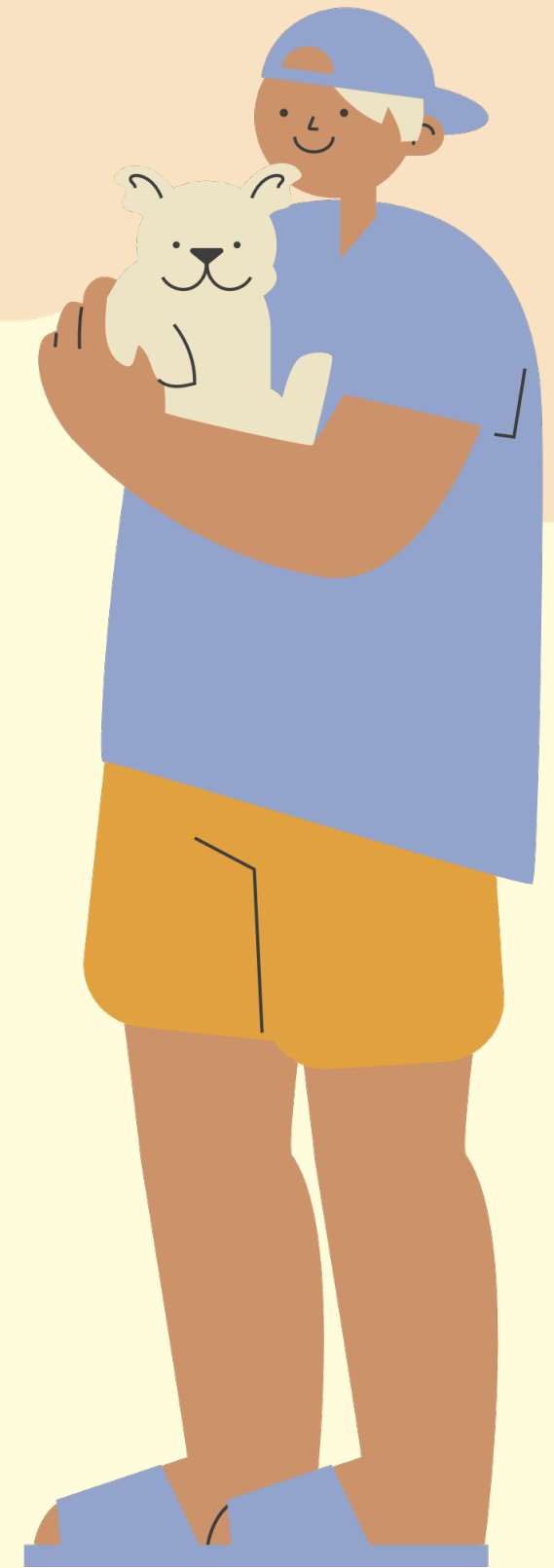
Who is trying to get in the room but can't --  
and what are the barriers?

Inclusion  
Asks

Has everyone's ideas been heard,  
respected and understood?

Belonging  
Asks

Is everyone feeling valued through positive  
connections with others and able to bring  
their authentic self to work?





WHO ARE  
YOU?



# DEI'S IMPACT ON BUSINESS

## Employees

Helping your team(s) realize their full potential.

## Clients & Pets

Understand our clients on a deeper level to help deliver the best care possible.

## Communities

Creating connections and educational moments around pet care.



# COMMON ROADBLOCKS TO DEI: BIAS



## Affinity Bias

- The tendency to favor individuals who are **similar to oneself** or share the same background.

## Authority Bias

- Inclination to **accept and value** the views, information, or recommendations from authoritative sources.

## Attribution Bias

- Explaining a person's behavior by **referring to their character** rather than any situational factor.



WHEN YOU DON'T  
INTENTIONALLY INCLUDE,  
YOU UNINTENTIONALLY  
EXCLUDE.

CAN YOU THINK OF A TIME WHEN YOU FELT  
EXCLUDED? HOW DOES IT FEEL TO BE INCLUDED?

# YOUR ROLE - ACTS OF INCLUSION

## Active Listening

- Pay Attention
- Withhold judgement
- Reflect
- Clarify
- Summarize
- Share

## Microaffirmations

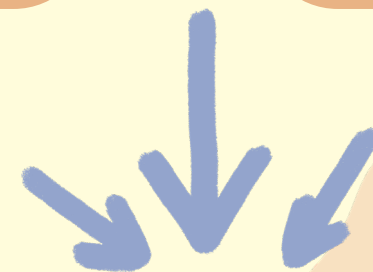
- Small subtle acts of recognition.
- Convey inclusion, care and listening.
- Respond constructively to differences.
- Ask questions and opinions, listen carefully.

## Allyship

- Proactively champions and advocates on behalf of others.
- Recognizes privileges they hold and uses them for the betterment of others.

## Inclusive Language

- People - first
- Conscious
- Accessible
- Accurate
- Non-stereotypical
- Gender Neutral



INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

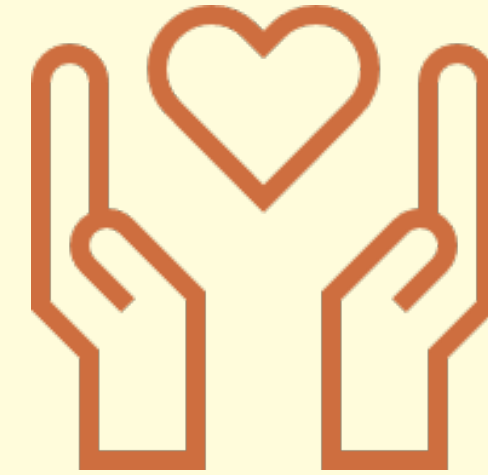
# AN INCLUSIVE LEADER:



Operates transparently rather than behind closed doors.



Fully embraces the vast diversity of today's workforce.



Recognizes efforts and accomplishments.

Takes a collaborative approach as opposed to command and control.



Is culturally agile, not tied to their own worldview.



Creates a safe space for people to give the best of their talents.



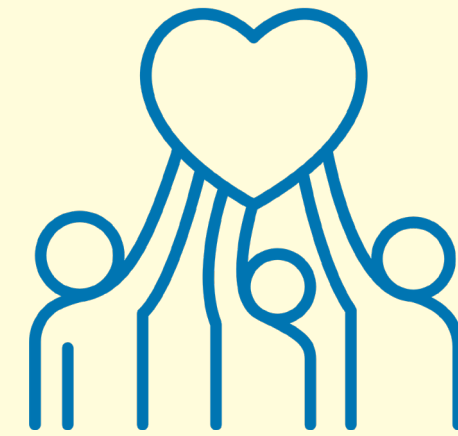
# DEI IN ACTION



- Client impact
- Get to know your clients.
  - Be receptive to hearing and learning.



- Employee impact
- Monthly discussions as a team.
  - Celebrating our differences.



- Community impact
- Take a look into your community's makeup.
  - Identify what key events happen in your community.

WHAT IS YOUR COMMITMENT?

# VETERINARY DEI RESOURCES



## DEI Training

- BlendVet
- Pawsibilities VetMed
- Vetspacito

## Affinity Organizations

- Association of Asian Veterinary Medical Professionals
- Black DVM Network
- Diversify Veterinary Medicine Coalition
- Latinx Veterinary Medical Association
- Pride Veterinary Medical Community
- National Association of Black Veterinarians
- Women 's Veterinary Leadership Development Initiative



# CONCLUSION



Let's stay connected:  
*Add me on LinkedIn*

*Email:*  
*Michael.Gamez@vca.com*



- DE efforts are muscles we need to strengthen!
- Inclusive leadership is a journey -- TRY AGAIN, repeat!
- Identify your commitment to DEI and stick with it.
- There is a community in veterinary medicine to support you!