

# So You're Tired Of Talking About DEI?

DEI FATIGUE | UMCVB Fall Conference  
September 2024

**miles**  
PARTNERSHIP

# TODAY

---

- Welcome & Introduction
- Learning Overview & Guidelines
- What Is DEI Fatigue?
  - Your experience
  - Definitions
- Solutions and Wrap Up



# With You



**Najauna White, CMP, CDE®**  
*Vice President, DEI*







INTRODUCTION

# About Miles Partnership





# Our Vision & Commitment

---

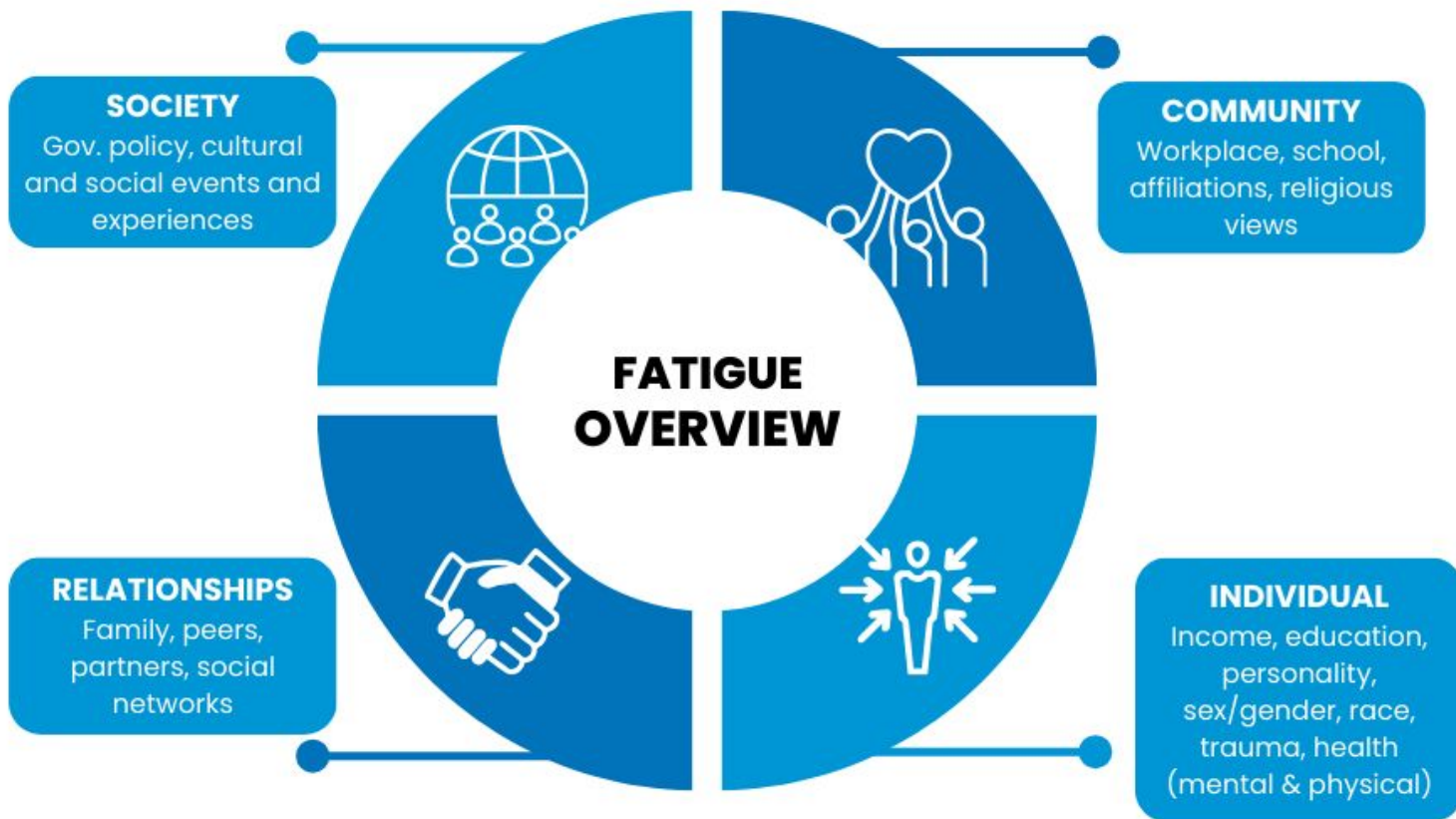
Our VISION is to be the global leader in strategic solutions that inspire and improve travel.

At the core of that vision, we are driven by our commitment to actively advance diversity, equity and inclusion to evolve equitable and inclusive marketing industry practices, drive innovation within the company and empower our team, our clients and the communities we serve.



# Learning Overview & Guidelines







## Learning Guidelines

**Respect** » confidentiality & experiences

**Lean** » into discomfort

**Set** » your own boundaries

**Ask** » questions for curiosity not judgement

**Share** » when you see fit, from your own experience



# What is DEI Fatigue?



MENTI POLL

# How Do You Feel About DEI Fatigue?





## UNDERSTANDING YOUR OWN DEI FATIGUE

**Objective:** Use this self-evaluation to understand how you may experience DEI Fatigue and how that experience may affect how you show up to work every day.

Answer these questions, discuss at your table. Share out some key themes and trends that you heard.

1. What comes to mind when you think about DEI Fatigue?
2. What opportunities do you see leveraging DEI?
3. What challenges do you see in DEI?
4. Can you recall a time when you felt included or excluded at work, when traveling, or in marketing?





## DIVERSITY

The **presence** of differences.

## EQUITY

**Working** to develop systems policies, and processes that take into consideration those differences and their barriers.

## INCLUSION

The **practice** of creating environments in which those differences feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued.



## DEI FATIGUE

# Definitions

### **FATIGUE**

Fatigue refers to a state of physical or mental weariness resulting from prolonged stress, overwork, or lack of rest. It can manifest as tiredness, reduced motivation, or a sense of being overwhelmed, which may impact one's ability to function effectively.





## DEI Fatigue

# Right Now

A specific form of fatigue experienced by individuals or groups involved in DEI initiatives. This type of fatigue occurs when people become **overwhelmed, disheartened, or frustrated** by the ongoing effort required to address DEI issues.

**DEI Fatigue can affect individuals at all levels within an organization**, from leaders who feel the strain of driving change, to employees who may feel overburdened by expectations to engage in or lead DEI efforts.



DEI Fatigue

# What It's NOT

1. **Opposition to DEI Efforts:** DEI fatigue should not be confused with resistance or opposition to diversity initiatives.
2. **Disinterest in DEI Initiatives:** It is not a sign that people are inherently uninterested in DEI. Many individuals experiencing DEI fatigue and still care deeply about these issues.
3. **A Universal Experience:** DEI fatigue does not affect everyone equally. People who belong to marginalized groups may experience fatigue differently from those who are allies or newly involved in DEI efforts.



**The  
Fatigue  
is Real**



# WHAT WERE HEARING

## Industry Challenges

- Teams and communities are not diverse - Organizations don't want to be inauthentic.
- Some communities struggle with accepting DEI - Organizations want to showcase diversity but are afraid of backlash.
- Community is attached to negative DEI events.
- DEI legislation is in place, now what?
- Where to start? And with what communities?



# Solutions to Fatigue





# FIVE SOLUTIONS TO COMBAT DEI FATIGUE

Five actionable strategies that we've found effective and sustainable.

## **Embrace It!**

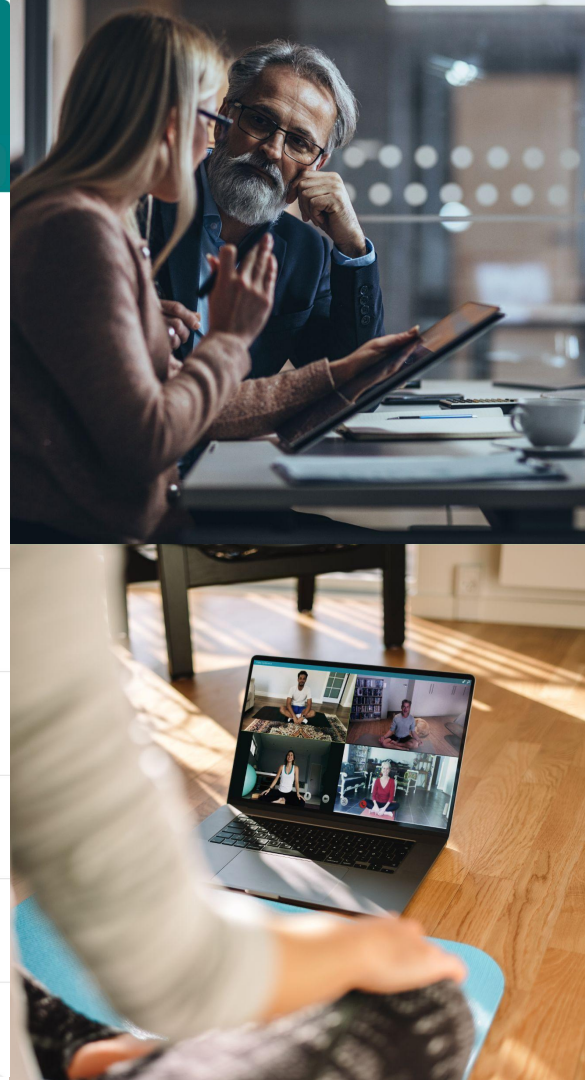
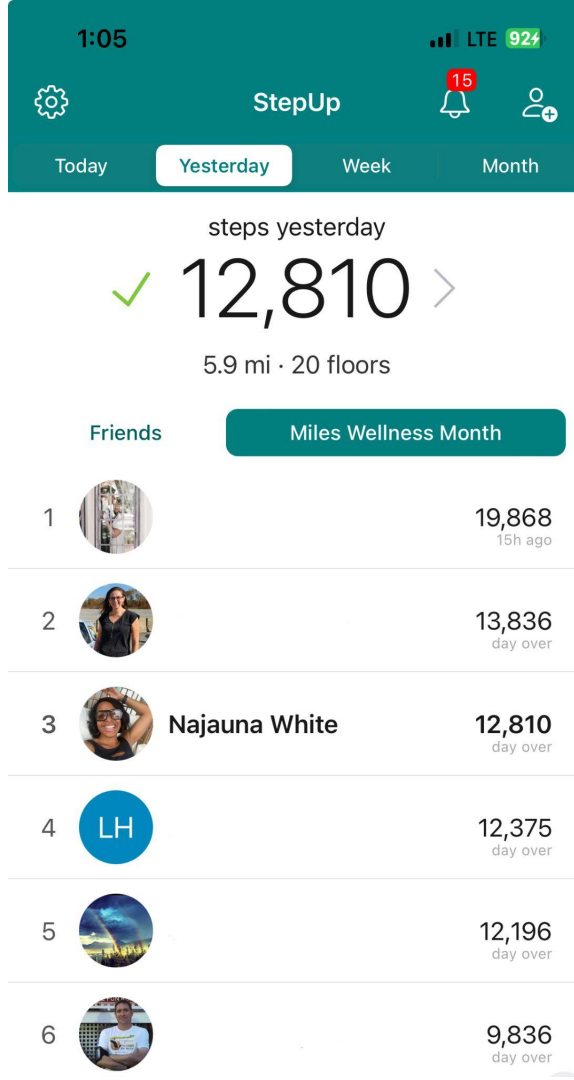
- Lean in to vulnerability. Tell your community who you are, what you want and show them *slowly*.
- Recognize that DEI fatigue is normal and signals a need to reassess and renew efforts.
- Take breaks, engage in new, meaningful activities, and ensure your strategies still align with your overall org. goals.



# Implement Human Elements

To help embrace and energize teams incorporate real connectivity

- Company wide wellness challenges
- Non-work-related 1:1 conversations
- Mental wellness sessions (facilitated).
- Town Halls - community



# FIVE SOLUTIONS TO COMBAT DEI FATIGUE

Five actionable strategies that we've found effective and sustainable.

## **Clearly Define DEI Goals**

- Set specific and achievable DEI objectives tailored to your organization.
- Goals could include conducting cultural assessments, offering DEI training, diversifying the workforce, or making services more inclusive.

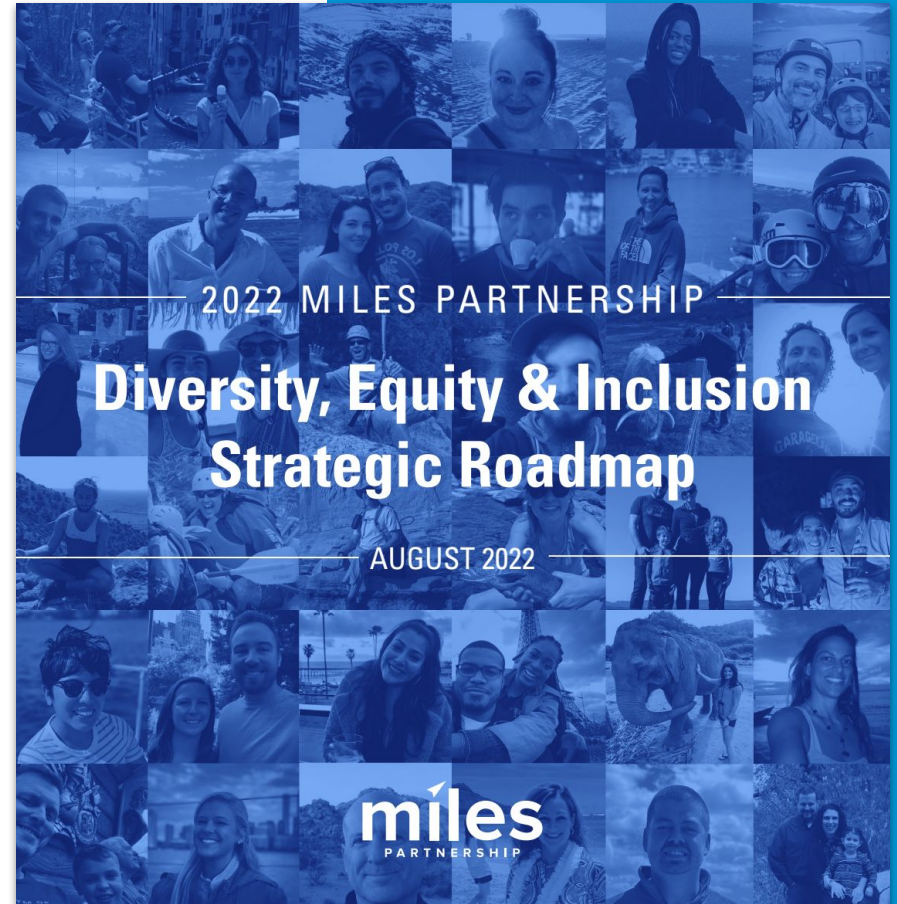


## Launch A Strategic Plan

- Who, What, When, Where, Whys?

Make the plan accessible to everyone, with clear timelines, department involvement, and a breakdown of how these changes will impact both the team and visitors.

Keep it simple, transparent, and ready to roll out!





# FIVE SOLUTIONS TO COMBAT DEI FATIGUE

Five actionable strategies that we've found effective and sustainable.

## **Ongoing Training and Education**

- Assess what your team knows and what they are interested in learning about DEI.
- Use this information to create tailored training programs, ideally facilitated by external experts to ensure everyone participates equally.

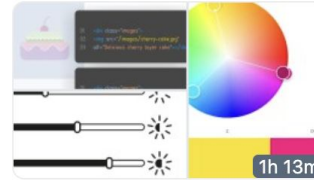


# Initiate Accessible Training

Keep ongoing DEI training fresh and accessible. Tailor sessions to what your team needs to succeed, whether it's breaking down biases or fostering inclusion.

Virtual trainings offer flexibility, while expert facilitators bring new perspectives and help ensure everyone is actively involved.

218 Results for "inclusive marketing"



Course

## Creating Inclusive Content

LinkedIn · By: Sabrena Deal · Aug 2022

4.7 ★★★★★ (227) · 11,312 learners · Beginner + Intermediate

Summarize key learnings

Is this course a good fit for me?



Course

## Diversity and Inclusion in Marketing: Inclusive

LinkedIn · By: Andrew McCaskill · Sep 2021

Certificate Eligible · 4.8 ★★★★★ (857) · 59,225 learners

Summarize key learnings

Is this course a good fit for me?



Course

## Marketing to Diverse Audiences

LinkedIn · By: Jonathan Jackson · May 2019

Certificate Eligible · 49m 36s le

Summarize key learnings

Is this course a good fit for me?



# FIVE SOLUTIONS TO COMBAT DEI FATIGUE

Five actionable strategies that we've found effective and sustainable.

## **Promote Inclusive Leadership and Collaboration**

- Encourage leaders who embody DEI values, as they can set a positive example for others.
- These leaders should collaborate with others to provide support systems that maintain enthusiasm and prevent burnout.



## What Does Your Team Look Like?

Inclusive leadership may not always look like what we expect, so take time to explore your team, values, and strengths.

Look for individuals who have the **passion and capacity** for DEI work, even if they don't fit the traditional leadership mold.

- This may be an opportunity for a community partnership.





# FIVE SOLUTIONS TO COMBAT DEI FATIGUE

Five actionable strategies that we've found effective and sustainable.

## **Develop a Feedback Loop**

- Establish a communication strategy that encourages feedback on DEI initiatives.
- This approach helps build trust, psychological safety, and a deeper understanding of DEI efforts.



# Establish An Internal Newsletter

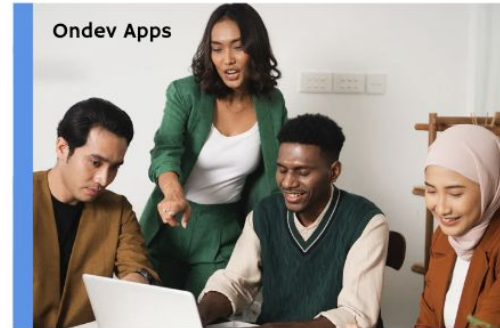
Develop a regular newsletter to highlight DEI progress and resources.

Use **anonymous surveys** to gather honest feedback from employees, ensuring leadership stays informed and responsive to team needs. These tools maintain ongoing dialogue and foster transparency.

JUNE 1, 2030

## The News

Ondev Apps Company Newsletter



### CREATING A CULTURE OF INNOVATION

By Leslie Boatwright

Company newsletters are essential in building relationships with your employees, customers, or even prospective clients. Engaging and professionally-made company newsletters have the power to inspire loyalty and repeat business. Get in touch with the people who matter to your business by making company newsletters one of your priorities.

Make your newsletter a beautiful representation of your

VOLUME 12

### Newsletter Highlights

A Message of Hope from the Executive Director

Creating a Culture Of Innovation

10 Secrets of Effective Meetings

Balancing Work and Home Life

A Year in Review: Our Wins and Milestones



# FIVE SOLUTIONS TO COMBAT DEI FATIGUE

Five actionable strategies that we've found effective and sustainable.

## **BONUS SOLUTION: Focus On What You Can IMPACT**

- Concentrate on the specific needs of your organization, destination and your visitors rather than getting caught up in broader societal trends, anti DEI legislation and social debates.
- Balance staying informed with taking meaningful, localized actions that directly impact your team.



Explore Minnesota's Efforts

# Holistic Approach: Content + Website Optimization



**THE HEART OF MINNESOTA**

Discover a land of pristine lakes and wooded hills, with miles of trails to explore by foot or bike in summer, or by snowshoe, snowmobile or fat bike in winter.

Central Minnesota is dotted with crystalline lakes, rivers and streams, perfect for fishing, boating, paddling and waterskiing. The region is also a notable golf destination, with over 70 scenic courses crafted by top designers. In the area's cities and towns, discover bustling main streets and abundant entertainment, shopping and dining. Plus, find museums and historic sites devoted to everything from aviator Charles Lindbergh and novelist Sinclair Lewis to Ojibwe Indian culture.

Here, you can fill up on fresh air and make priceless memories; don't be surprised if this magical place keeps calling you back.





To ensure we reached audiences most likely to plan a vacation to Kentucky, we looked at interest-based data to target a specific set of new audiences with relevant affinities. Thanks to additional CARES funding, we expanded our marketing efforts to reach four new audiences in 15 national-market sets, with strategies customized for each audience:

### » Black Travelers

(adults 25-64) with an affinity for bourbon, cultural experiences and the great outdoors

**Markets:** Atlanta, Chicago, Detroit

### » Hispanic Travelers

(adults 25-54) in search of family-friendly, multi-generational outdoor and cultural experiences

**Markets:** Chicago, Nashville, Indianapolis

### » Snowbird Travelers

(adults 60+) who we wanted to see Kentucky as more than just a rest stop on their way south for the winter

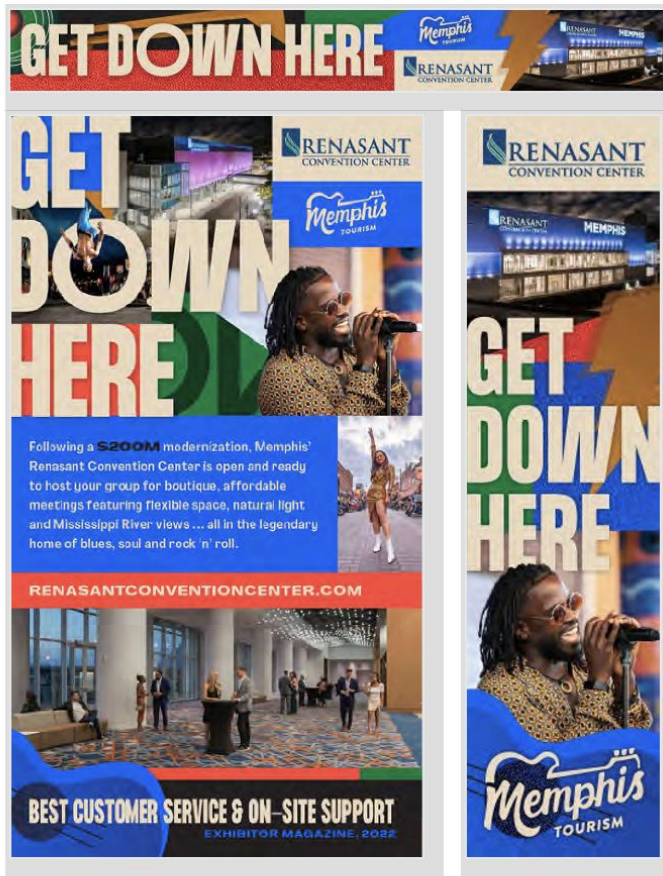
**Markets:** Milwaukee, St. Paul-Minneapolis, Ann Arbor

### » Family Travelers

(adults 25-64) in new markets looking for a diverse range of active, adventurous and unique experiences

**Markets:** St. Louis, Charlotte, Grand Rapids, Dallas, Philadelphia, Orlando and Washington, DC





Custom Email

Digital Ads

Over the life of these campaigns, we leveraged insights to inspire and optimize creative direction and messaging.

October through December 2021 campaign highlights include:

- » Our LinkedIn awareness campaign generated **5,371 website visits** and the lead-generation campaigns produced **98 leads**
- » Paid search drove **more than 135,000 impressions** and delivered **more than 125 conversions**; ads that drove directly to the convention center website delivered an **additional 71 conversions**
- » Email open rates exceeded **60%**



The first quarter of 2022 showed continued performance: LinkedIn drove 125 leads—a 27% increase over Q4 and a 165% increase over 2021.



**Focus on the work. Not the letters. DEI transformation doesn't happen overnight.**



## DEI FATIGUE INSIGHTS & ACTIONS

Our Interviews revealed a strong commitment to DEI across various organizations, with a focus on authentic community engagement, narrative change, and the inclusion of diverse perspectives in leadership.

Concerns about DEI fatigue and sustaining momentum underscore the need for continuous leadership support and clear accountability.

Moving forward, the emphasis should be on deepening community impact, refining metrics, and ensuring that DEI remains a core priority.







# Thank you!

Najauna.White@MilesPartnership.com

Visit our website at  
[www.MilesPartnership.com/DEI](http://www.MilesPartnership.com/DEI)



**Najauna White, CMP, CDE®**  
Certified Diversity Executive | Community  
Builder | VP of Diversity & Inclusion

