NIST Community Building Group
• The Volunteers
• The Problem and Group Motivation
• What the Group Did, Learned and Produced Thus Far
• Broad Observations and Recommendations
• Next Steps
### NCBG Volunteers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Org</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ally Esquibel</td>
<td>OISM (Boulder)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicholas Barbosa</td>
<td>MML (Boulder)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jacqueline Hildebrand</td>
<td>OFRM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jewel Green</td>
<td>OHRM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Katie Schlatter</td>
<td>BOO (Boulder)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michelle Cordova</td>
<td>EEO (Boulder)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Riley Wilson</td>
<td>PAO</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dan Cipra</td>
<td>M&amp;O</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrew Conn</td>
<td>IAAO</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jeanita Pritchett</td>
<td>DEIO</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ashley Boggs-Russell</td>
<td>PCO (Charleston)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Albert Wavering</td>
<td>EL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skip Vaughn</td>
<td>OFPM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amy Cubert</td>
<td>OHRM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Konstantina Di Menza</td>
<td>CTL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christine Carson</td>
<td>CTL (Boulder)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meghan Percy</td>
<td>OSHE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jim St. Pierre</td>
<td>ITL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heather Snow</td>
<td>OAAM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robert Hickernell</td>
<td>PML (Boulder)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christopher Currens</td>
<td>OHRM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam Biacchi</td>
<td>PML (Sigma Xi Liaison)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juan Fung</td>
<td>DEIA (EL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greta Babakhanova</td>
<td>MML (G PEAR Liaison)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jo Wu</td>
<td>DEIA (Shops)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khan Hasan</td>
<td>ADIIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heather Mayton</td>
<td>ADIIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer Berry</td>
<td>MML (BPEAR Liaison)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Ferris</td>
<td>PML (BPEAR Liaison)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara Guttman</td>
<td>ITL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Fasolka</td>
<td>MML (Chair)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- 31 Volunteers from across NIST
- All ADs represented; Most OUs represented
- G,B,C NIST sites represented, HI Liaison
- Liaisons to G/B PEAR, Sigma Xi, WiSTEM
Views of the Problem/Concern

Staff and Leadership:
“NIST is losing valuable workplace attributes we had before the pandemic”

Valuable Aspects:
- Sense of Community and Belonging
- Institutional Pride, Esprit de Corps
- Fun
- High-Quality Early Career Experiences
- Stakeholder/Customer Engagement
- Networking and Connection
- Idea Sharing, Collaboration and Teamwork
- Sense of Wellness and Wellbeing

Elements a healthy work community
Elements of a great employee experience
Key to NIST Mission

Common Staff Viewpoint:
“I have no reason to be on campus”
- I can do a lot from home
- When I work on campus, I get what I need to get done and then leave
- Being on campus is difficult
  “I have to leave campus for everything I need”
- There is little happening on campus
- I feel lonely and isolated

We trained staff to do this 2+ yrs

Many staff have never experienced a vibrant NIST campus

Many of these are better/more easily fostered with in-person interactions (e.g. on campus)
**Motivation:** NIST Leadership and Staff are concerned about poor work culture and lack of interpersonal interaction, especially on campus(es)

**Goal:** Jumpstart NIST work culture in ways that spur interaction, and enhance valuable workplace attributes

**Method:** Purposeful creation of programs of events, practices and spaces designed to support and enrich workplace culture
Simple Model of Culture

A Culture can be defined (in part) by:

1) Commonly held **Values** (beliefs, mores...)

2) **Behaviors** and **Practices** that support and celebrate held values (customs, rules, special events...) This is accountability!

*In addition, a Culture may create*

3) **Spaces** that support cultural practices (meeting spaces, special areas...)

*If we want to change/build culture, we need to embrace values, adopt supporting behaviors/practices and create supporting spaces.*
Simple Model of Workplace Culture

**Culture**: Liberal Democracy

**Values**:  
• Representative Government  
• Transparency  
• Rule of Law

**Practices/Behaviors**  
• Elections  
• Debate and Press Freedom  
• Checks and Balances  
• National holidays

**Spaces**  
• Polling Places  
• Buildings for representatives to meet  
• Courts

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**Culture**: NIST Work Culture

**Values/Valuable Aspects**:  
• Sense of Community and Belonging  
• Institutional Pride, Esprit de Corps  
• Enculturation  
• Fun  
• High-Quality Early Career Experiences  
• Stakeholder/Customer Engagement

**Practices/Behaviors**:  
• Many NIST in-person events were paused due to pandemic and not restarted  
• Some of these transitioned to virtual events

**Spaces**  
• Many of these are under renovation, in planning, closed, or don’t exist.
Initial Brainstorming Activity

WORKPLACE VALUES/ VALUABLE ASPECTS

Institutional Pride
Wellness and Wellbeing
Networking and Connection
Collaboration and Teamwork
Early Career Experiences
Community
Belonging
Esprit de Corps
Fun

Events
Practices
Spaces

Wellness Activities

What Events, Practices, Spaces, and Wellness Activities does NIST need to support these Workplace Values?
110 creative ideas were generated

Diverse Themes:

- Care for Others
- Fun and Social Events
- Celebratory Events
- Ways to Improve Hybrid
- Wellness Spaces
- DEIA Focused Ideas
- Networking Events
- Arts and Culture
- Places to Eat and Gather
- Lab Tours
- Open Houses
- Contests/Competitions
- Beautification/Improvements to Work Environment
- Physical Health Programs
- Social/Affinity Groups
- New Services
- Mental Wellbeing Programs
- Food and Beverage Services
- Community
- Belonging
- Esprit de Corps
- Institutional Pride
- Wellness and Wellbeing
- Networking and Connection
- Collaboration and Teamwork
- Fun
- Early Career Experiences
3 Initial Take Aways

1) Working on NIST Campuses is Difficult
   NIST Campuses lack at least one of these basics:
   - Palatable Water: Gaithersburg (many buildings)
   - Food: All (Gburg has pop-up)
   - Coffee/Snacks: All (Gburg has pop-up)

   These are barriers to staff working on campus

2) NIST Campuses Lack “Neutral Space”
   Welcoming space where staff from different parts of the organization can freely gather, socialize, eat, drink
   - NIST Gburg Cafeteria filled this need
   - Many central common areas are closed
   - Common areas require permission/scheduling
   - Many suitable spaces are “owned” by OUs
   
   This is a barrier to staff socializing across campus
   Virtual Platforms are a competing Neutral Space

3) News about Activities and Campus Improvements is not Reaching Staff on Campus
   - Example: Lack of awareness of Pop-up and Pop-Up Coffee in Gaithersburg
   - Example: Plan for replacing water fountains
   - Some supervisors discourage participation in community activities

Some Reasons and Recommendations follow
NCBG Program Proposals In Development

Campus Improvements
- Campus Basics
- Gathering Places
- Campus Services
- Campus Environment
- Commuter Resources

Policy, Guidance, Information
- Policy/Guidance Package for Community and DEIA Activities
- More TBD

Better Hybrid
- Rebuilding connection through intention and equity in hybrid work
- More TBD

Themes/Priorities Within
- Water
- Central Eating Places (G,B)
- Coffee
- Institutional Pride
- Social Events
- Enculturation

Guidance for Supervisors

Cross-campus Community

Activities and Events
- Learning about NIST and NIST work
- Networking and Connection
- Celebrating Community @ NIST
- Creating Community via VEOs
- NIST Week
- Games and Competitions
- Re-invigorating BLEA/SEBA

Wellness and Work Life Balance
- Group Activities for Physical Wellness
- Mental Wellbeing
- Practicing Mindfulness

“Beyond the Gym” Wellness

Proposals for recommended programs of action
Broad Observations and Recommendations
Observations

Many organizations at NIST are partly responsible for the staff campus experience.

- OFPM
- SEBA/BLEA
- VEOs
- DEIO
- EAP
- OUs
- PAO
- OHRM

No one is responsible for the big picture or for coordinating efforts needed to shape workplace culture.

Recommendations:

1. Make the staff campus experience a focus and priority
2. Put a body in charge of managing staff experience

Other organizations: Employee Experience Office(r)

- Vision for workplace experience/culture
- Builds/Coordinates community activities
- Staff engagement/feedback
- Holder of Institutional workplace values, history, traditions
Focus on NIST and NIST Work

**Observation:** NCBG-ideated activities and discussions showed:

- Staff want to know more about the work of their colleagues
- Staff want to know more about NIST, NIST work and how NIST works.
- ADMR staff want a connection to the science they support
- ADMR staff want the opportunity to celebrate their work too

**Recommendation:** Activities about NIST and NIST Work:

- Colloquia on NIST work: Sigma Xi NIST Frontiers Series
- NIST Movie Night: PAO videos w/ panel discussions (SEBA has popcorn maker)*
- Lab Tours for administrative/support staff*
- Open Houses*
- NIST-themed games and contests*
- Talks on NIST Awards work

*NCBG  FOCUS OF TWO NCBG PROGRAMS
Inclusion is not addressed by simply inviting everyone to every event

Observations:
- In the past, campus events largely aimed at ZP and ZA Employees.
- Fewer activities tailored for ZT, ZS, Associates and Wage Grade employees.
- Inclusion at NIST is complex: Campuses, Admin/Technical, Career Path, Generational...
- NIST staff have developed higher expectations around inclusion

Recommendations:
- Make inclusion a design factor in community program development
- Inclusion means common activities for all NIST staff AND diverse events tailored to meet the needs of diverse groups.
- Communications that reaches all staff is key to inclusion
- Widespread supervisor support/permission key to inclusion
Observations

• NCBG Discussions: Communications about campus events/activities are not reaching staff

• Blast email and iNET remain the go-to methods for communicating campus news

• New work patterns suggest that on-campus staff aren’t reading email or iNET while onsite.
  • Campus: lab/physical work, Home: computer work

• Some staff don’t have regular access to computers or email.

• There is no single place to look for on campus-centered activities, news and events.

Recommendations (w/PAO)

1) Diversify strategies for communicating about campus activities
   • Posters and Flyers
   • News/Events Monitors in Hallway/Lobby (delayed due to IT Security requirements)
   • Multifaceted Comms Campaigns
   • Direct Calendar Invitations

2) Centralized/compiled information about campus events
   • Campus Events carve-out on iNET
   • ON CAMPUS TODAY Email Newsletter

3) OUs need to amplify/repeat communication of on-campus activities.
   • Town Halls, Emails, Local Announcements
   • Support and Encouragement to Participate
Next: Vertical Support is Essential

**Top Leadership:** Support and Communication of All of Campus/All of NIST Events

**ADs:** Cross-OU Activities for Tailored for AD Community

**OU/Division:** Emphasize Importance of Community
- Amplify event communications, community news
- Recognize Community Building as Necessary Work
- Organize OU and Division Level Campus Events
- Recognition for On Campus and Community Building Efforts

**First Line Supervisors:** Recognize value of community
- Encourage, or at least permit, staff to participate in campus events, community activities.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Organization</th>
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<tr>
<td>NIST Frontiers Seminar Series</td>
<td>Jan, Feb, March 2023</td>
<td>NIST Sigma Xi</td>
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<td>Sigma Xi Early-Career Poster Presentation</td>
<td>May, 2023</td>
<td>NIST Sigma Xi</td>
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<td>PEAR Writing Group</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>PEAR</td>
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<td>Boulder PEAR Seminar Series</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
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<td>Boulder PEAR Lunch</td>
<td>Biweekly</td>
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<td>PEAR Accolades</td>
<td>April-July</td>
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<tr>
<td>PEAR Networking Happy Hour</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
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<tr>
<td>PEAR Buddy Program</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>PEAR</td>
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<td>Division-level Open House (643)</td>
<td>Feb-23</td>
<td>MML/643</td>
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<td>WiSTEM lunch and learn</td>
<td>recurring events</td>
<td>WiSTEM</td>
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<td>PI Day Celebration</td>
<td>3/14/2023</td>
<td>MML, EL</td>
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<td>History of Womens Groups at NIST</td>
<td>2-Mar-23</td>
<td>WiSTEM</td>
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<td>Her NISTory</td>
<td>9-Mar</td>
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<td>Career Mentoring Events</td>
<td>23-Mar</td>
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<td>Women in Stem Town Hall</td>
<td>30-Mar</td>
<td>WiSTEM</td>
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1. Discuss work and recommendations with ADs (ADLP complete)
2. Plan paths for priority ideas. Identify Champions.
3. Secure support (time and money) from NIST leadership
4. Complete and refine Programs
   • Effective and impactful
   • Plan for inclusion
5. Feedback from staff
   • Public comment on written programs
   • Focus Groups
• Are we on track?

• What other efforts should NIST be thinking about in terms of building a community where everyone thrives?