

# deir in lighting NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the DEIR in Lighting newsletter, a quick and easy way to collect and share news, events, and resources among ourselves and with others outside the working group. Help us spread the word via your own networks, newsletters, LinkedIn posts, and other means! Send content to [amy@akoyaonline.com](mailto:amy@akoyaonline.com).



## meeting recap

### in this issue:

- Meeting Recap . . . . 1
- How I Got into Lighting:  
Bernadette Boudreaux . . . . . 2
- Events . . . . . 3
- Opportunities . . . . . 3
- Resources. . . . . 3

**On May 23**, 26 members of the DEIR in Lighting working group met on the topic of “pipeline” — top priorities for DEIR in lighting outreach and engagement, current opportunities that support these priorities, and resources to share. Check out the [Jamboard](#) from the discussion.

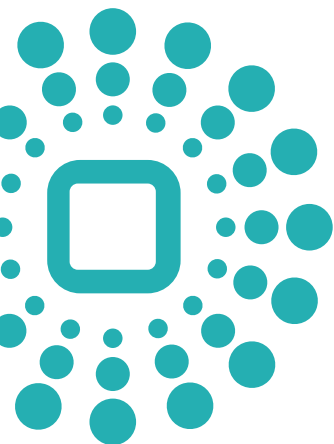
The group also brainstormed a mission statement; inputs were folded into the proposed statement below:

*As a diversity of voices will elevate and sustain our profession, our mission is to present the broad range of lighting vocations as viable and equitable opportunities for people of all backgrounds. By prioritizing inclusion and diversity, we will help create opportunities for workforce and pathway development that value contributions from everyone.*

Further conversation revealed the need to focus on developing the pathways into lighting that will ultimately feed the pipeline. Each of us has our own unique “how I got into lighting” story, and sharing personal stories imparts to the future lighting workforce that careers in lighting are not one size fits all: there are many ways to enter the industry and many different educational levels and opportunities. Bernadette Boudreaux of the DesignLights Consortium facilitated the meeting and shares her own pathway to lighting in this issue. We plan to profile stories like Bernadette’s in each newsletter. Do you have a story we can share?

**Send us your feedback** on the proposed mission statement and Jamboard notes. Contact [amy@akoyaonline.com](mailto:amy@akoyaonline.com).

**Mark your calendar** for the next DEIR in Lighting working group meeting, hosted by the U.S. Department of Energy: **Monday, July 25, 2:00–3:00 p.m. Eastern.**



## how i got into lighting: Bernadette Boudreaux



**Like so many of us**, I fell into the lighting industry. But falling in has been one of the greatest career moves I have made. At age 10, I knew I wanted to be an automotive engineer and how to achieve it. Growing up in the Detroit area, there were a lot of programs emphasizing careers in the automotive field and the importance of STEM education. Through programs like Detroit Area Pre-college Engineering Program (DAPCEP), I was able to participate in activities from grade school to high school focused on developing future leaders in STEM and the automotive industry.

Most of my high school friends ended up in the automotive field due to this, so it appears this strategy worked. It filled the industry's need to develop a strong pipeline of diverse, eligible, emerging leaders, especially people of color who had not been afforded similar opportunities in the past. Many automotive companies partnered with MSIs and HBCUs via career fairs, mentoring, and internship opportunities to ensure students were considered for employment as graduates entering the work force. These partnerships allowed me to get a full scholarship from Ford Motor Company to attend Howard University and obtain my Bachelor of Science degree in mechanical engineering. Ford offered guaranteed internships though college and a nearly guaranteed job upon graduation. So as a high school senior, I had a clear and directed pathway into a career I had been exposed to since elementary school.

**“The great thing about lighting is that skills from other industries are transferable.”**

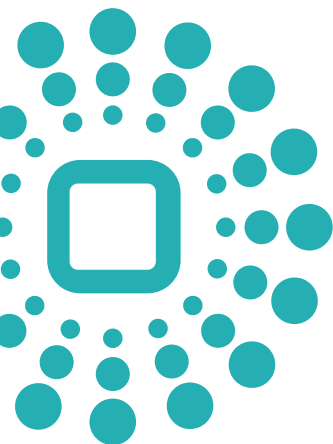
After working in the automotive industry for five years, and a move to Atlanta, a recruiter told me about a lighting company called Acuity Brands. I was not familiar with the company, the products, or what a driver even did within a luminaire. I had never met anyone working in lighting and did not know what a career in lighting meant for a mechanical engineer, believing careers in this field were strictly for electrical engineers or architects. Little did I know there were many more opportunities for me in lighting than in automotives. The great thing about lighting is that skills from other industries are transferable. Acuity Brands recognized this and hired me as a light engine engineer developing lighting systems for outdoor luminaire applications.

As time passed my career eventually led me to the DesignLights Consortium, where I evolved from a technical analyst to associate director of operations, managing the application review process for the SSL, HORT, and NLC Qualified Product Lists. Who knew this could even be a career? Working for a nonprofit to assist in energy efficiency... I wish I knew about this years ago. In this position I continue to learn how vast the lighting industry is and how many other industries interact with lighting.

Since my pathway to lighting was not clear, my intention is to work with other DEIR and industry leaders like the Department of Energy to create a strong pipeline of diverse, emerging professionals who can be future leaders. I want to see more people — including people of color — walk, run, or jump right into this industry rather than falling in!

*We'd like to develop stories from all of you, to be collected and shared by all of us – via emails, newsletters, LinkedIn, and other means. Sharing your stories may alert others to existing opportunities or spur ideas for future pathways we can create.*

Ready to share your story? Contact [amy@akoyaonline.com](mailto:amy@akoyaonline.com).



## events

### [EquiTECH 2022 Summer Program – June 21 and 23](#)

Presented by the Inclusive Engineering Consortium, EquiTECH 2022 is a conference designed to promote DEI within the tech ecosystem, in turn benefitting industry, electrical and computer engineering faculty, and the underrepresented minority students they serve.

### [2022 LightFair – June 19–23](#)

If you're attending LightFair, check out these sessions (details at [www.lightfair.com/browse/#/show](http://www.lightfair.com/browse/#/show)):

- **Tuesday, June 21, 2:00–3:00 p.m.:** Spotlight on the Queer Experience in Lighting
- **Wednesday, June 22, 4:00–6:00 p.m.:** WILD Speaks! Building Diversity in the Lighting Industry Pipeline, plus Networking Event
- **Thursday, June 23, 10:30–11:30 a.m.:** Mentorship Q&A (for emerging lighting professionals)



## opportunities

### [Coming in August: JUMP into STEM Challenges](#)

JUMP into STEM is a university and college student competition that inspires the next generation of building scientists and encourages diversity in the field. Supported by DOE's Building Technologies Office and its national laboratories, new challenges for the 2022–2023 cycle will be released in August.

### [Professors Wanted!](#)

Join the JUMP into STEM Professor Team and help cultivate the next generation of building scientists. Members of the Professor Team are a critical link connecting students with the competition. They help shape the challenges to best fit with their curriculum requirements and are invited to monthly meetings to receive competition updates and discuss best practices with the Professor Team network.

### [Industry Speakers Wanted!](#)

The University of New Mexico has an Optical Science and Engineering Seminar Series and seeks speakers on optics-related SSL topics for the Fall series. This is your opportunity to speak directly to future lighting professionals! Contact Dan Feezell ([dfeezell@unm.edu](mailto:dfeezell@unm.edu)) for more information.



## resources

### [DOE Better Buildings Workforce Accelerator](#)

The DOE Better Buildings Workforce Accelerator supports efforts that raise the level of building science and energy efficiency knowledge in the nation's building workforce through recognition, lessons learned, and resource sharing.

### [LightJustice.org](#)

LightJustice.org is a new forum for lighting professionals to share information, ideas, and experience about lighting justice issues, opportunities, and actions.

Contact [amy@akoyaonline.com](mailto:amy@akoyaonline.com) to be added or removed from this DEIR in Lighting newsletter mailing list.