

February 2021

# ***AF&PA Statement of Principles on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion***

## The Paper and Wood Products Manufacturers' Role in Society

American Forest & Paper Association (AF&PA) member companies make essential products from renewable and recyclable resources for safe and healthy living. Our manufacturing operations are integral with communities where we operate. AF&PA is committed to positively impacting diversity, equity, and inclusion while also advancing the essential role the industry has in the local, regional and national economies.

AF&PA will support the advancement of diversity, equity and inclusion by facilitating the exchange of member ideas and information to help:

- Explore programs and external partnerships to improve awareness of opportunities and increase retention and growth of all diverse individuals with a variety of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives to drive productivity and innovation.
- Contribute to the well-being of the communities in which we live and work through initiatives that increase economic and social equity and inclusion, and support career development and advancement for all diverse groups. Community efforts may include engaging in public dialogue, investing resources, and providing education and job readiness training, including Science Technology Engineering and Math.
- Promote supplier diversity including, for example, procuring timber from members of the Sustainable Forestry and African American Land Retention Network, and certified Minority/Women-owned Business Enterprises.
- Build awareness, leveraging the trust in our products, brands and companies, to explore barriers that hinder the advancement of diversity, equity and inclusion in our society and the steps we can take to overcome them.

The forest products industry accounts for approximately four percent of the total U.S. manufacturing GDP, manufactures nearly \$300 billion in products annually and employs approximately 950,000 workers. The industry meets a payroll of approximately \$55 billion annually and is among the top 10 manufacturing sector employers in 45 states.

AF&PA's membership includes small, medium and large companies with family, private and public-ownership and operations in rural and urban communities across the country. More than 75 percent of all U.S. pulp and paper mills are in counties that are more than 80 percent rural. Those mills frequently serve as a communities' largest employer and the local economies can be highly dependent on the facilities' economic viability.

Our industry recognizes the value of attracting and retaining new, qualified, and diverse employees. We will approach this opportunity with unity of purpose and intention as we strive to advance diversity, equity and inclusion within the industry.

*Our Association recognizes that our strength stems from people. We will continue to foster and promote a diverse, equitable and inclusive workforce by uniting people from different backgrounds, experiences and perspectives. This is critical to our success, allowing the industry to attract and retain talented employees. By advocating and working to remove barriers, we foster an inclusive environment, enabling people to contribute and achieve their fullest potential.*