

Methods to Improve Ethnic and Gender Diversity in the Cedar Rapids Fire Department


Jason N. Andrews

Cedar Rapids Fire Department, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Certification Statement

I hereby certify that this paper constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotation marks so indicate, and that appropriate credit is given where I have used the language, ideas, expressions, or writings of others.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke at the end, positioned above a horizontal line.

### Abstract

A review of data revealed that the Cedar Rapids Fire Department (CRFD) is predominately white and male. The problem was the CRFD has not identified methods to recruit women and ethnic minorities. The purpose of this research is to identify methods to increase the recruitment and hiring of ethnic minorities and women. Descriptive research was used to answer the following questions: (a) What are the negative impacts to the CRFD of not having ethnic and gender diversity? (b) What efforts are being made by the City of Cedar Rapids Human Resources Department to minorities and women? (c) What is being done by other fire departments and private organizations to recruit and hire ethnic minorities and women? (d) What obstacles are present preventing the successful recruitment of ethnic minorities and women in Cedar Rapids? A literature review was conducted to determine current best practices utilized throughout both the emergency services industry as well as private organizations. An interview was conducted with the City of Cedar Rapids Assistant City Manager to determine current minority and female recruitment practices and its effectiveness. Finally, two surveys were distributed nationally to identify hiring obstacles for women and ethnic minorities. Results indicate that it is difficult to attract ethnic minorities and women to the fire service if they are not adequately represented within the organization; CRFD is no stranger to this idea. The demographics of CRFD do not match the demographics of the City of Cedar Rapids. Based on research I recommended that the CRFD form a recruitment committee comprised of diverse individuals from within the organization, other departments, and members of the community. The committee will be responsible for the development of active recruitment processes in the community followed by monitoring and adjustment of processes over time as the community and organizational demographics change.

Table of Contents

Certification Statement.....2

Abstract.....3

Table of Contents.....4

Introduction.....6

Background and Significance.....7

Literature Review.....11

Procedures.....22

Results.....28

Discussion.....39

Recommendations.....49

References.....53

Appendices

Appendix A: Diversity Interview Transcript.....57

Appendix B: Cedar Rapids Fire Department Organizational Chart.....59

Appendix C: Diversity in Fire Department Employment-Recruitment Survey.....60

Appendix D: Diversity in Fire Department Employment-Target Audience Survey.....65

List of Figures

Figure 1: Recruitment Methods.....30

Figure 2: Population Served.....34

List of Tables

Table 1: Ethnicity and Gender of the Cedar Rapids Fire Department.....9

Table 2: Cedar Rapids Demographics vs. Employment Demographics.....41

### Methods to Improve Ethnic and Gender Diversity in the Cedar Rapids Fire Department

Citizens around the United States expect to have a professional and highly trained fire department, the City of Cedar Rapids is no exception. Past practice and quality measures have shown that the CRFD is indeed highly trained and effective but what we have failed at is employing a workforce in which the demographics of the fire department are representative of the Cedar Rapids community. The fire department needs to be able to communicate with many cultures in prevention efforts as well as emergency situations. Communication is not limited to different languages. The communications styles of different ethnicities, cultures, and genders need to be considered.

The literature review has provided insight that fire service leaders yearn to find new and innovative ways to recruit and hire a much more diverse workforce that is representative of the demographics of the community. Despite the desire to increase the employment of women and ethnic minorities the goal continually seems to elude us. McNeil (2008) illustrates that to some people diversity in the fire service is a point of adversity while many other people feel that diversity is in fact a show of organizational strength and intelligence. Elimination of the adversity and the creation of acceptance are key factors in the creation of a successful agency in the fire service.

The fire service currently employs 293,000 people, of which 17, 287 or 5.9 percent are women, 24,612 or 8.4 percent are black or African-American, 3,223 or 1.1 percent are Asian, and 22,854 or 7.8 percent are Hispanic or Latino (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015).

Comparatively, according to the 2010 United States Census, the population of the United States is consists of 50.8 percent females, 12.6 percent black or African Americans, 4.8 percent Asians, and 16.3 percent Hispanic or Latino (United States [US] Census Bureau, 2010).

The demographics of the CRFD are similar to those of the rest of the fire service. The problem is the CRFD has not identified methods to recruit women and ethnic minorities. The purpose of this research is to identify methods to increase the recruitment and hiring of ethnic minorities and women. Descriptive research will be used to answer the following research questions: (a) What are the negative impacts to the CRFD of not having ethnic and gender diversity? (b) What efforts are being made by the City of Cedar Rapids Human Resources Department to minorities and women? (c) What is being done by other fire departments and private organizations to recruit and hire ethnic minorities and women? (d) What obstacles are present preventing the successful recruitment of ethnic minorities and women in Cedar Rapids?

### **Background and Significance**

The City of Cedar Rapids is the second largest city in Iowa with a 2015 estimated population of 130,405 residents (United States Census Bureau, 2016). The CRFD covers a jurisdiction of approximately 72 square miles (City of Cedar Rapids, 2016). Cedar Rapids is located in Linn County which is in the northeastern part of Iowa. The City of Cedar Rapids is primarily an urban community with several small suburbs that border the city. The southern border of the city is primarily rural interface. Services provided by the CRFD are fire suppression and non-transport Advanced Life Support (ALS) Emergency Medical Services (EMS). Additional services are categorized as special operations. The special operations consist of HazMat, water rescue, confined space rescue, trench rescue, and urban search and rescue (USAR) (Cedar Rapid Fire Department, 2016). Cedar Rapids is considered one of the leading manufacturing regions of the United States and is ranked as the largest corn-processing city in the world, as well as one of the leading bio-processing and food ingredients centers in North

America (City of Cedar Rapids, 2016). Notable businesses include Quaker Oats, Rockwell Collins, International Paper, Archer Daniels Midland (ADM), and General Mills. The CRFD protects 21 public elementary schools, six middle schools, four high schools, as well as various other parochial and private learning institutions. Interstate 380 brings a heavy travel flow through the center of the city: another notable hazard is the Cedar River, which divides the east and west halves, geographically.

The CRFD consists of two formal divisions: Operations and Support (Appendix B). The Operations Division is managed by an Assistant Chief. Fire suppression, EMS, special operations, and training make up the Operation Division. The Support Division is also managed by an Assistant Chief; duties include fire prevention, public education, investigation, and facilities maintenance. Total authorized strength is 145 personnel. The Operations Division consists of an Assistant Chief, six Battalion Chiefs, a Training Chief, three Training Captains, 33 Shift Fire Captains, and 92 Shift Firefighters (Cedar Rapid Fire Department, 2016). The Support Division consists of an Assistant Chief, a Fire Marshal, an Assistant Fire Marshal (AFM), two Arson Investigators, two Captain Inspectors, one firefighter Inspector, a Public Education Manager, and Public Education Firefighter (Cedar Rapid Fire Department, 2016). Nine fire stations are home to thirteen frontline pieces of apparatus. Fully staffed apparatus consists of; one ladder truck, one quint, one rescue, two shift commander vehicles, and eight engines. All eight engines, the ladder truck, and the quint operate as provisional ALS units, and the rescue operates as a BLS unit. EMS Transport is provided by Cedar Rapids Area Ambulance Service (AAS) which is a non-profit ALS ambulance service. Cedar Rapids is home to two regional trauma centers.

Although the CRFD is comprehensive in its provision of emergency and non-emergency services it has historically failed at representing the demographics of the community. The CRFD and the City of Cedar Rapids Human Resources department have yet to come up with strategies to expand the inclusion of ethnic minorities and females through effective recruiting and hiring practices. This lack of inclusion is clearly illustrated by Table 1 which shows the current employment demographics of the CRFD.

Table 1

*Ethnicity and Gender of the Cedar Rapids Fire Department*

Gender and Ethnicity	Percentage of Employment
Male	96.6%
Female	3.4%
Black or African American	0%
White	98.6%
Asian	0.7%
Multiracial	0%
Hispanic or Latino	1.4%

Diversity in the fire service is viewed in many different ways. As evidenced by the previously illustrated statistics the CRFD and the fire service across the country has struggled with the successful recruitment and hiring of ethnic minorities and women. The CRFD Fire Chief and senior staff feel that diversity in the CRFD is a long overdue subject that needs to be

researched and rectified. The continued lack of inclusion lends itself to not providing the best possible service to the genders and ethnicities of the Cedar Rapids community. In an interview with the Sandi Fowler the City of Cedar Rapids Assistant City Manager, she relates that “you will miss the interests of a given demographic if they are not directly represented in the workforce” (personal communication, December 15, 2016). S. Fowler further explained the recruitment challenges faced by the CRFD by stating that “it is impossible to anticipate what attracts someone to a workforce if their gender or ethnicity is the properly represented, bias is bound to cloud our judgment in these situations” (personal communication, December 15, 2016).

In the fourth year, Executive Leadership Course students are challenged with facing adaptive challenges within their organizations. The course purpose of the *Executive Leadership* is to “...develop the ability to conceptualize and employ key processes used by effective executive-level managers in the exercise of adaptive leadership.” (United States Fire Administration [USFA], 2015, SM, p. vii.). In an adaptive challenge, we are faced with changing assumptions, attitudes, and traditions by exploring new solutions to a problem. By identifying ways to improve the diversity of the CRFD we are welcoming change. The resulting adaptive change will certainly increase levels of community trust, a higher level of professionalism, a positive move towards improved community relations, and an overarching feeling of community ownership. To successfully implement this change the fire department needs to gain buy-in from the community members. It is necessary to show the community that the department truly wants inclusion from all genders and ethnicities in the City of Cedar Rapids.

In the 2014-2018 USFA Strategic Plan, there are five goals that are outlined to increase the effectiveness of the fire service. Strategic Goal 3 aims to; enhance the fire and emergency services’ capability for response to and recovery from all hazards. (USFA, 2014-2018, p. 12).

There is a need locally to foster a feeling of inclusion that will foster trust and illustrate the importance of all genders and ethnicities. Having employees that share the same beliefs and values will add credibility to the CRFD. Furthermore, this research project supports the USFA strategic goal four by advancing the professional development of fire service personnel and other people engaged in fire prevention and control activities. (USFA, 2014-2018, p. 13).

### **Literature Review**

The literature review conducted by the researcher focused on the recruitment and hiring practices for women and minorities in the United States. There was a significant amount of data available in the form of; government statistics, reports, journals, magazines, and books. Diversity in the private sector, fire service, law enforcement, EMS, and the military all proved to provide a significant amount of data. Additional research was conducted to determine what obstacles are present in the hiring of women and ethnic minorities as well as the negative organizational impacts of underemployment of women and minorities.

Diversity can be looked at in many ways. For the purposes of this paper, the researcher has chosen to focus on diversity as it relates to gender and ethnicity. To be diverse is synonymous with being inclusive. Being inclusive is providing a workplace that is welcoming to all individuals, groups, ethnicities, races, and genders. According to Bucher (2015) being inclusive is a promoting a sense of belonging and empowerment while involving everyone and valuing their unique talents and contributions.

According to the National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) most recent study of the fire service through 2014, there is currently just over 1.1 million career, and volunteer firefighters in the United States and only 7.3 percent of those are female. To break that down further, there are just under 350,000 career firefighters, of which only 3.5 percent are female

(Haynes & Stein, 2016). Simply stated, the current face of the fire departments in the United States do not represent the faces of the communities in which they serve. A fire department must take active steps to welcome diversity in the department in general as well as all ranks because the communities that we respond to have an ever increasing diverse population.

With diversity in our communities, there are several aspects that must be considered such as; culture, traditions, and language just to name a few. There are emergencies that occur in every community multiple times a day, whether they are full-blown disasters or a simple medical call, the fire service is still called upon to respond. One of the notable areas in which diversity can help is communication or differences in languages. According to Osilaja (2009) communication in a time of crisis is paramount. By increasing diversity, you are multiplying the reach of communication by giving access to more affected groups. Furthermore, he explains that having diversity in a time of crisis contributes to the overall ability of a team to make sense of a problem and ultimately come up with a solution (Osilaja, 2009).

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 protects all job applicants and employees from discrimination in hiring, promotion, discharge, pay, fringe benefits, job training, referral, and other aspects of employment, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin (U.S. Equal Opportunity Employment Commission, 2016). Even though ethnic minorities are protected by the Civil Rights Act many organizations are resistant to change. Adherence to laws and regulations simply is not enough; laws alone will not create diversity. Fox, Hornick, & Hardin (2006) stress that there needs to be a top-down effort in diversity recruiting to be successful. One example of a top-down approach to diversity is a portion of the strategic plan created by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). In its strategic plan the DHS identified three key goals in its recruitment process: secure a high-performing workforce drawn from all

segments of American society, cultivate a culture that encourages collaboration, flexibility, and fairness, and institutionalize diversity and inclusion as a key strategic priority (U.S. Department of Homeland Security [DHS], 2016).

Diversity and inclusion create a competitive environment for the hiring of the top candidates in today's workforce. The Department of Defense has identified this trend and created a diversity and strategic plan for the years 2012-2017. This plan was created to provide a direction for leadership to be to be involved at all levels of recruitment. The plan created an alignment of leadership that will encourage recruitment efforts that are coordinated, collaborative, and in an integrated manner that will be supported by measurable outcomes (U.S. Department of Defense, 2012). The Department of Defense published three main goals in their effort to ensure diversity: ensure leadership commitment, employ an aligned strategic outreach effort, and to develop, mentor, and retain top talent (U.S. Department of Defense, 2012).

Members of many communities feel that the fire service does not have an attitude of acceptance to women and minorities. At times women in specific feel that the fire service breeds the "frat house" type environment and attitude. Research supports that there is still a pervasive atmosphere of hostility toward women in the fire service. Areas such as sexual harassment, mealtime harassment, promotions, training, daily assignments, and poorly fitted personal protective clothing have been identified in research by Hulett, Bendick, Thomas, and Moccio (2008). This does not appear to be just an isolated problem; in fact, according to Hulett et al. (2008) nearly 85 percent of women surveyed in their study felt that they were treated differently due to their gender. This can be especially damaging in the form of informal recruitment, or word of mouth, because a friend, family, or associates of female firefighters may not consider a career in the fire service due to negative perceptions.

Often the negative perceptions or environment that is viewed by women and minorities is not an intentional act. According to the International Association of Women in Fire and Emergency Services (2013) many organizations create an environment of prejudice subconsciously. The dominant demographic frequently shows resistance due to: unfamiliarity, the perception of threatened values, competition for advancement, and the loss of the status quo. This fear of loss tends to lend itself towards continued resistance to diversity, but the International Association of Women in Fire and Emergency Services (2013) feels that diversity is inevitable and it will ultimately lead to improved productivity, cooperation, and collaboration in the fire service.

The physical nature of the job has proven to deter women in the fire service. According to Roberts (2012a) many women chose not to consider the fire service as a career because they are concerned about the physical requirements that they will face. That is not to say that women have not been able to prove that they are fit for the job, in fact, many women have been successful in passing the candidate physical ability test (CPAT). The CPAT is a validated test that was created by a partnership between the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) and the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC). The problem that was found is that according to Hulett et al. (2008) less than 50 percent of the women that they surveyed were given a validated physical abilities test such as the CPAT. This lack of validations causes the female candidates to be at a disadvantage because the strength weighted components of the test have not proven valid to both men and women.

Misunderstanding and lack of knowledge about the career of firefighting is not just a deterrent to females in the fire service. Ethnic minorities encounter some of the same obstacles and misconceptions about the hiring process. Research shows that most people feel comfortable

in groups in which people are like themselves (Willing, 2011). According to information provided by James Garrett, a spokesman for the Kansas City Fire Department, one of the major deterrents to attracting minorities is that when children in the city encounter firefighters they seldom see people that look like them (Rizzo, 2014). For this reason, Rizzo (2014) reports it was recommended that recruiters that are female and or of an ethnic minority be used in the recruitment process to send a message to the public that the organization has a commitment to diversity. Even though a department may take internal steps towards increasing diversity, it is important that this is portrayed to the public. According to Thill (2016) “educating the public on diversity and inclusion in the fire service is a win-win, by letting the public know and showing that you are an inclusive fire department, you may significantly broaden your pool of candidates” (p. 1).

Although it has been illustrated that diversity in the fire service is currently a problem it is important for organizations to also forecast for the future. According to the United States Census Bureau (2012), the United States is going to continue to be even more diverse. It is estimated that by 2060 the population of blacks will increase to 14.7 percent as compared to 13.1 percent in 2012, Asians will increase to 8.2 percent as compared to 5.1 percent, and Hispanics will increase from 17 percent to 31 percent. With this increase in diversity, challenges in providing service will only be accelerated. According to a study conducted by FIRE 20/20, it was found that fire departments and members of the multicultural community may find themselves at greater risk and programs in fire prevention may be less effective due to language barriers, the lack of proactive relationships, issues with trust, and gaps in knowledge (Sagen, 2008).

Research in the area of language barriers found that the majority of firefighters identified challenges with language due to a growing number of customers that do not speak English. In the absence of a multilingual employee, responders found themselves more frequently requesting interpreters which in turn can delay and inhibit a timely delivery of service. Also, it was found that fire prevention personnel were increasingly requesting fire prevention materials and safety regulations to be translated into languages other than English in order to conduct business (Sagen, 2008).

The study conducted by FIRE 20/20 looked specifically at fire departments in Austin, Milwaukee, and Seattle and evaluated their ability to foster proactive relationships. What was found is that even though the aforementioned fire departments had community outreach programs, they were not proactive in nature. The major issue exposed is that the organizations failed to collaborate with the multicultural community leaders. In short, efforts need to be initiated by the fire department leader in direct collaboration with community leaders (Sagen, 2008).

One of the most glaring gaps that was identified is trust. Sagen (2008) reported that according to the FIRE 20/20 study trust issues were present by both the fire service community as well as the multicultural community. Emergency service providers often times felt like they were being misused for low acuity calls in which they are being taken out of service and unavailable for other higher acuity emergency calls. In contrast members of multicultural communities reported that often times they fail to call 911 even in times of true emergencies due to lack of trust in firefighters. However it was found that lack of trust is not specifically related to the firefighter or firefighters themselves but a more global lack of trust due to issues with authority, lack of knowledge about what firefighters do, cultural differences, and the lack of

ongoing relationships between the fire department and the community (Sagen, 2008). To break it down further multicultural community leaders explained that members of their community often times fear authority, fear that police will arrive with the fire department, fear that their language won't be understood, do not have the financial means to pay for service, cultural embarrassment, mistreatment due to sexual identity, and the fear of possible deportation (Sagen, 2008).

The lack of responder knowledge in the area of cultural norms and practices is a perfect example of the knowledge gaps that are present between responders and members of the multicultural neighborhood. Often time's members of the fire department are not familiar with the practices, behaviors, and social norms of a community which can certainly impact the ability to safely and effectively provide service to a specific ethnic community. Sagen (2008) reports that the ethnic community also suffers from a lack of knowledge, it was identified that members of different ethnic communities are often times uninformed and confused about fire services and lack basic fire and life safety knowledge.

To overcome the diversity gap in the American fire service, it is clear that a proactive approach needs to be taken in not only educating the public about the fire service and its inclusion but to also education the fire service about the importance of diversity in employment. McNeil (2008) explained that many of the leaders in today's fire service grew up in a segregated community. Segregation can lead to stereotyping about race, gender, sexual orientation, and ethnicity; this is harmful because it is easy for leaders to continue the use of this faulty sense of values and beliefs in their guiding principles towards recruitment, hiring, and retention of women and ethnic minorities. The mindset of resistance needs to be changed to one of acceptance. According to Roberts (2012b) the recruitment of a diverse workforce needs to be a top priority of

every fire chief while at the same time ensuring that those hired can perform at their best in order to be successful in the organization.

If the fire department leadership does not portray an attitude of acceptance the organization as a whole, as well as potential candidates, will have the perception that diversity is not a welcome principle in the fire service. Fox et al. (2006) warns that if a fire department does not portray a clear message of the value of diversity, does not foster an accepting environment, and does not develop or enforce harassment policies this can create a negative perception of the organization and potentially discourage a qualified female or minority candidate from applying. The fire service is faced with a cultural shift in which the organization as a whole recognizes the value of acceptance and openly accepts diversity as a guiding principle in the values of the organization (Hook, 2015). The paradigm shift towards acceptance will ultimately allow the progressive organization to better meet the goals of the organization (McNeil, 2008). Many fire service and public leaders in today's society feel that the lack of non-white employees leaves a significant gap in the quality of service that is provided (Frazier, 2011). This quality of service can be corrected by a diverse organization that is prepared to coexist and respond to a community in which such barriers as language and cultural differences are present (Bachman, 2012). This premise is echoed in private business. According to Martin (2013) a significant percentage of private business leaders feel that diversity in an organization is necessary and that the benefits are an improvement in operations and enhancement towards the accomplishment of organizational goals.

The fire service has identified a need and has charged its leaders to focus on the adaptive challenge of recruitment that ensures diversity while at the same time ensuring the highest level of service provided (McNeil, 2008). The face of today's community is ever changing with a

shift towards more and more minorities available for the workforce. To capitalize on the increasing minority resources available and to ensure acceptance it is imperative that today's fire service leaders are adequately trained in the value of diversity in order to promote a positive environment to exist with change (McNeil, 2008). Winston Jr. (2014) explains that the hiring of minorities and women is not about fulfilling quotas but rather hiring good firefighters that reflect the demographics of the communities that they serve.

Overcoming internal bias and changing the perception of the available minority workforce is just one step towards increasing the number of female and ethnic minorities that are willing to apply for and successfully secure a job in the fire service. For an agency to launch a successful hiring campaign, they must develop a clear and direct proactive plan that deliberately targets a wide range of diverse groups in a way that specifically advertises the acceptance of different cultures (Scott, 2013). One way to approach the situation is through collaboration as explained by Gannon (2013) when he suggests connecting various groups that have cultural, sexual, and even religious similarities with those that they are trying to reach. One successful example is the New York Fire Department that deliberately used specialized community programs that aimed to educate and incorporate minorities that were interested in the fire department (Frazier, 2011).

One cannot always rely on candidates to come to them. Query (2014) relates that it is important to take an active approach to recruiting outside of the office as well. It is explained that seeking out diverse candidates in locations and organizations with a diverse population has proven to produce greater quality and a higher level of competitiveness in their field. Taking an active recruitment approach is often times not considered because of the traditionally large numbers of people that apply for an admittedly low number of available positions. To some

people in the fire service taking this approach can appear as favoritism, reverse discrimination, or that of filling quotas. It is imperative that the organization illustrate the need for qualified firefighters while the organization is responsible for recruiting diverse candidates to fill this need (Sendelbach, 2013).

To ensure that the highest level of candidates is available while encouraging diversity the IAFF has published “Achieving and Retaining a Diverse Fire Service Workforce” ten key initiatives:

1. Specifically, target the group that you want to reach and recruit. Generic messages and blanket advertising do not work to reach minorities and women;
2. When targeting particular groups and when doing recruiting in general, use language to promote a message of inclusiveness;
3. Use some formal methods of recruiting such as advertising;
4. Give specific and detailed information about the job, entry level skills needed, work requirements, salary, and benefits;
5. In development of recruiting information and in advertising, remember to target the candidate’s family as well;
6. Use minority and women recruiters;
7. Communicate the value of diversity in all of your messages, even those not specifically designed for recruiting;
8. Use a fair and valid selection process that measures what is really required for the job;
9. Only require the education needed to perform the job; and

10. For retention and job satisfaction, provide a mentoring program for newly hired firefighters (Fox et al. 2006, p. 8-12).

Fire Chief Magazine echoes many of the same suggestions in the hiring of women in the fire service. Best practices identified include: recruiting actively, increasing recruitment in sports and fitness, increasing awareness in the medical field, and recruiting college students (Roberts, 2012b). Word of mouth can be considered either an active recruitment method as demonstrated by in-person visits to schools, job fairs, and sports facilities or informal when used to spread the word of job openings to friends, family, and acquaintances. While the informal word of mouth is considered effective in attracting candidates it has proven to generally influence those that are of the same demographic of the department (Fox et al. 2006). For this reason Fox et al. (2006) stressed that if a department utilizes informal word of mouth recruitment that they integrate it with a more comprehensive type of recruitment program that specifically targets minorities such as minority TV/radio and publication ads, direct mail interest cards, news or special reports, female TV/radio ads, cadet/explorer programs, and the mentoring of prospective candidates. Further emphasis was placed on ensuring that physical ability tests are validated with adequate pre-training available to all candidates regardless of sex to aid in the recruitment efforts (Roberts, 2012b).

The physical ability test many times is a deterrent to female candidates because of the perception that firefighting is a highly physical job that is only suited to male candidates. While firefighting indeed does have physical demands that are extreme at times it has been proven that females have the ability to pass the test and perform the same functions as their male counterparts. With that said, it is important to make an active effort to show this is the truth. Edwards (2010) explains that an effective way to recruit women and minorities is to show that

they hold important positions in the organization. By making this open display of diversity, your organization will be more successful in its diversity recruitment initiatives and will result in a more diverse workforce. The effort needs to be made in showing candidates that diversity is not just welcomed at the entry level. A sign of a strong sense of diversity in an organization is the acceptance of diversity at all levels and ranks. Women and minority applicants want to know that they are applying for an organization that will be supportive of their desire to advance professionally and personally. According to Shackelford (2010) having minorities at all levels of the organization proves to the applicant that promotion is possible and that their personal investment in the organization will ultimately pay off.

The literature review helped the author identify the importance of department ownership in the diversity initiative specifically beginning with the leadership team. It was stressed how social interaction with the community is essential in gaining the trust of the female and ethnic minority community as it relates to recruitment, hiring, and retention of minorities. The researcher realized that there are many social, cultural, and sexual stigmas that must be overcome inside and outside of the fire department before a truly diverse workforce can be realized. The literature review also provided the author with many initiatives undertaken by the military, social organizations, labor unions, and other fire departments in their quest for diversity. Ultimately the literature review emphasized the importance of a fire department to resemble the demographics of their community to better serve our customers which will ultimately reduce injuries, loss of life, and property.

### **Procedures**

Descriptive research was the primary method utilized to answer the following questions.

(a) What are the negative impacts to the CRFD of not having ethnic and gender diversity? (b)

What efforts are being made by the City of Cedar Rapids Human Resources Department to minorities and women? (c) What is being done by other fire departments and private organizations to recruit and hire ethnic minorities and women? (d) What obstacles are present preventing the successful recruitment of ethnic minorities and women in Cedar Rapids? The purpose of this research is to identify methods to increase the recruitment and hiring of ethnic minorities and women. Other procedures used for this project include the literature review, a survey, and a personal interview with the City of Cedar Rapids Assistant City Manager Sandi Fowler.

Most of the literature review was conducted utilizing online sources through keyword searches regarding the recruitment, hiring, and retention of women and ethnic minorities. The majority of the searches returned information from EMS and fire related periodicals on the subject of diversity in emergency services. Other significant sources of literature reviewed were state and federal strategic plans that outlined diversity goals in the workforce. All documents were downloaded and reviewed for use in this project. Other sources of literature were garnered from the Cedar Rapids Public Library, the CRFD Library, and the authors' personal library.

Two surveys (Appendix C) and (Appendix D) were distributed electronically through a survey questionnaire facilitated by Zoomerang.com<sup>TM</sup>. Recipients of the surveys were Executive Fire Officer (EFO) classmates as well as a random electronic distribution facilitated by the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) using a compilation of member emails that belong to the National Society of Executive Fire Officers. This means of distribution was chosen because the members are generally upwardly mobile and motivated to effect change in modern fire and emergency services. Recipient group was in excess of 800 persons.

The first survey (Appendix C) was a general recruitment survey intended to garner information regarding diversity recruitment strategies and obstacles. The survey consisted of 14 questions. The first three questions were general information regarding the agencies name, populations, and size of the department to try to ensure a representative cross-section of agencies across all populations and geographies. Question three was designed to obtain information from the recipients if their respective organizations currently have a recruitment process in place that specifically targets women and ethnic minorities. Question four was a follow-up question asked to identify what person or group manages the recruitment process in their organization. Questions six and seven asked what specific methods does each organization utilize in the recruitment of potential candidates for employment and if one method is more effective than the other. Questions eight and nine asked what are the entry requirement as well as the application and hiring steps involved to gain employment in their organizations. Question ten was a follow up to question nine inquiring if the survey recipients felt that any of the hiring steps currently inhibit the successful hiring of ethnic minorities or women. Those that indicated that their hiring process created barriers were invited to identify and provide examples in the comments section of the question. Question eleven was specifically designed to gain information on creating more inclusion. This question asked if the organization has added, removed, or changed anything in their application and or hiring process. Question ten was intended to determine what agencies have a recruitment budget and if so the amount of the budget. Question thirteen was asked to determine what general barriers exist in the hiring of women and ethnic minorities, and finally, question fourteen was asked so that agencies who identified barriers in hiring diverse candidates were afforded the opportunity to identify programs or processes that were employed to overcome the previously barriers.

The second survey (Appendix D) was a target audience survey intended to be completed by those that identify themselves as an ethnic minority and or a female employed in the fire service. Those that answered the survey were afforded the opportunity to self-identify their sex and ethnicity with the assurance that all results would be anonymous and presented in an aggregate manner. No department or geographic identifiers were tabulated. Questions one, two, and three asked the recipients ethnicity, sex, and rank in an effort to gain a sufficient cross section of diversity in the survey. Questions four and five were again asked to support a diverse cross section of respondents by asking the population of their jurisdiction and the number of sworn personnel employed by their agency. Question six was designed to obtain information on how candidates find out about employment by asking recipients how they specifically were made aware of the hiring process when they chose to enter the fire service, and question seven asked if they, as identified ethnic minorities or women, personally choose to recruit other minorities or women. Question eight was an opinion question asking if it is felt that barriers exist in the recruitment of women and or ethnic minorities. If the respondent answered yes they were afforded the opportunity to elaborate in the comments section of the question. Question nine was a follow up for those that identified barriers to offer solutions in removing or correcting the problem. Question ten was similar to eight in that it was looking for the respondent to identify barriers but in this question, it was more specific by asking what barriers exist in the hiring process for women and or ethnic minorities. Again question eleven was a follow-up question allowing the respondent to identify means to remove the identified barriers. Finally, questions twelve and thirteen were both opinion questions feelings about diversity in the fire service. Question twelve asked the respondent to identify the positive attributes of having a diverse

workforce, and question thirteen asked the respondent to identify the negative aspects of not having a diverse cross section of employees in the workforce.

The final phase of the research for this project was an interview (Appendix A) with the Assistant City Manager of Cedar Rapids Sandi Fowler. S. Fowler is heavily invested in diversity recruitment and hiring through her experiences as the assistant chief executive of the City. The format was an in-person interview conducted on August 15, 2016. S. Fowler was chosen because in her capacity as the Assistant City Manager she supervises the Director of Human Resources. In conjunction with the Director of Human Resources, S. Fowler is responsible for the recruitment and hiring processes of all City departments including the fire department. The interview was intended to identify if there are any minority and or female recruitment strategies employed by the City of Cedar Rapids Human Resources Department. The interview consisted of nine questions the first of which was to identify her name and title for the purposes of the interview transcript. The second question asked S. Fowler to detail in her experience what is the importance of the recruitment and hiring of ethnic minorities and women in the fire department and City of Cedar Rapids employment in general. Question three asked S. Fowler to provide information on the current community climate by asking her how she feels the Cedar Rapids community views the ethnic and gender balance in the CRFD, Cedar Rapids Police Department (CRPD), and the City of Cedar Rapids workforce in general. Question four was directed at organizational health by asking her what she feels are the negative organizational impacts of not having sufficient ethnic and gender diversity. Questions five and six were asked to obtain information about the current and future recruitment processes that are present in the City of Cedar Rapids to increase diversity. Question five specifically asked what processes or steps are currently in place and when they started, are they working, and has success been realized more in

one specific department than the other. Question six was looking for future initiatives by asking S. Fowler if there are any specific recruitment or hiring steps that have been identified and are being developed for use in the future. Questions seven and eight were similar to the barrier question asked in the target audience survey by asking her to detail what she feels are the roadblocks present in the recruitment of ethnic minorities and women in public safety employment. This question was specifically asked of S. Fowler due to her being a female serving as the Assistant City Manager. Finally, question nine was an open-ended question allowing S. Fowler to provide any additional information that I had not asked about in the interview.

There were several limitations identified during the research and drafting of this applied research project. First, the majority of literature reviewed by the author including magazines, newspapers, books, and journals relating to diversity were heavily laden with opinion and in some cases generational bias. The second limitation identified is both surveys potential for racial and sexual bias. The survey presented in Appendix C has the potential for bias in questions ten and thirteen because some organizations will believe that they have no problems with ethnic and or gender diversity in their department. The survey in Appendix D intended to be completed by the target audience has the potential for gender or ethnic bias due to the number of opinion based questions. The researcher is unable to substantiate several of the responses due to the lack of verified evidence. Additionally, the research found that after review of the 107 respondents to the target audience survey only 38 of them identified as an ethnic minority or female. This brings to question the level of honesty in completing the survey as a whole this, was exacerbated by the negative tone and in some cases open racial bias by non-minority or female respondents.

The 69 target audience surveys that were returned by those not identifying as female or an ethnic minority were disqualified from analysis.

### **Results**

The results of this applied research project are derived from three sources, the diversity recruitment survey (Appendix C), the target audience survey (Appendix D), and the interview with the City of Cedar Rapids Assistant City Manager Sandi Fowler (Appendix A). Both surveys were distributed electronically to over 800 persons. Recipients of the survey were the EFO classmates associated with the author over a four-year time frame. Additionally, the surveys were distributed via random electronic distribution facilitated by the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) using a compilation of member emails that belong to the National Society of Executive Fire Officers.

The fire department recruitment survey was distributed to over 800 persons, and 29 completed the survey. Questions one, two, and three requested the fire department name, size, and population served in their respective jurisdictions. The list of recipients is too large to list in this section; however, the respondents represented were diverse in size, population, and geographic location. The fourth question asked if the respondent's organization currently has a recruitment program that specifically targets ethnic minorities and or women. This was a yes or no question that did not allow for further comments. Seven organizations or 22.6% indicated that they currently have a minority and female recruitment program while remaining 24 or 77.4% indicated that they don't actively recruit females or ethnic minorities.

Question five asked who manages the recruitment in the respondent's organization. The choices available were; human resources, fire chief or member of the command staff, assigned to

a uniformed employee, dedicated civilian recruiter, or other. Two choices received the majority response. The fire chief or a member of the command staff received the largest percentage at 63.3% or 19 responses while human resources was a close second with 60% or 18 responses. It was identified that 13.3% of the time recruitment was delegated to a member of the agencies uniformed staff followed by two agencies or 6.7% of the agencies employ a dedicated civilian recruiter. Additionally, 20% of the responders chose other with comments indicating in all cases that recruitment is a collaborative effort between human resources and members of the fire department staff.

The literature review identified two forms of recruitment; informal recruitment such as word of mouth and formal or active recruitment such as an advertisement, open houses, and school visits just to name a few. Question six inquired what recruitment methods are utilized by the respondent's respective organizations. The results of this question answered original research question number three "what is being done by other fire departments and private organizations to recruit and hire ethnic minorities and women." Figure 1 outlines the response to this question.

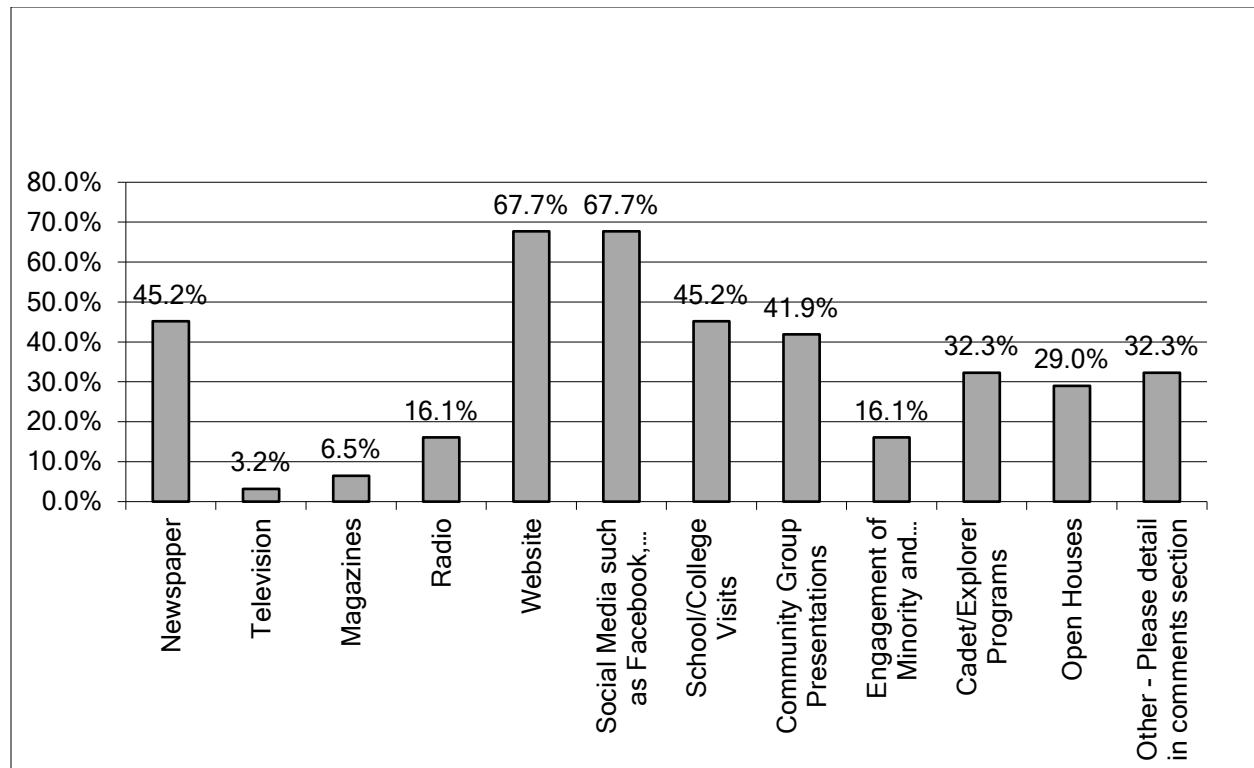


Figure 1. Recruitment Methods

This question allowed respondents to choose all methods that apply to their organization. It is important to note that nearly 70 percent of agencies utilized both websites and social media as common recruitment methods. A relatively low number of respondents identified past traditional methods such as television, magazine, and radio advertisement while nearly 50 percent reported they still utilized newspaper advertisements and school or college visits. Only 16.1% of agencies identified the engagement of female or ethnic minority community leaders in their recruitment process which is contrary to many of the suggestions identified in the literature review. Of the 32.3% of respondents that chose other and provided additional information in the comments section almost all of them indicated the use of informal recruitment methods such as word of mouth to family, friends, and acquaintances. The results of question six were quite clear in indicating that multiple recruitment methods are utilized by almost all of the agencies that responded. Literature review and previous experience by the researcher anticipated this finding,

so question seven asked that respondents to identify if any recruitment method or methods were more effective than the other. The majority or 71 percent of respondents indicated that they felt that no method was more effective than the other. With that said, 29 percent did identify increased success with an identified method. The most popular methods that were identified in no particular order are; word of mouth, targeted audience telephone calls, school visits, job fairs, and explorer programs.

Question eight asked respondents to identify the minimum hiring qualifications for their agency. Educational requirements dominated the responses. Just over 77 percent of agencies indicated that they require a high school diploma or Graduate Education Diploma (GED) and 6.5% indicated that they require some form of college degree, although they did not identify the level of degree or major. Additional education was focused on EMS certification. Thirty-two percent required an EMT certification, and almost 10 percent require the candidate to be a certified paramedic. Almost 60 percent have an age requirement that was not defined. Other notable requirements were hazardous materials certification at the operations level in nearly 20 percent of the agencies and a Firefighter 1 certification is required for employment at over 35 percent of the fire departments surveyed. The survey allowed comments to be offered if the respondent had other requirements to add. Of the fourteen comments offered all of them dealt with requirements such as residency and or having a valid driver's license. Question nine asked the respondents to detail the specific steps that a candidate for hire must participate in to gain employment. Of the agencies that responded many similarities were noted when tabulating the results. Over 90 percent of departments require a physical ability test, background screening, and department interviews. Almost 75 percent require a written exam and drug testing while just 19 percent require civil service interviews. Additional steps offered by 35 percent of the

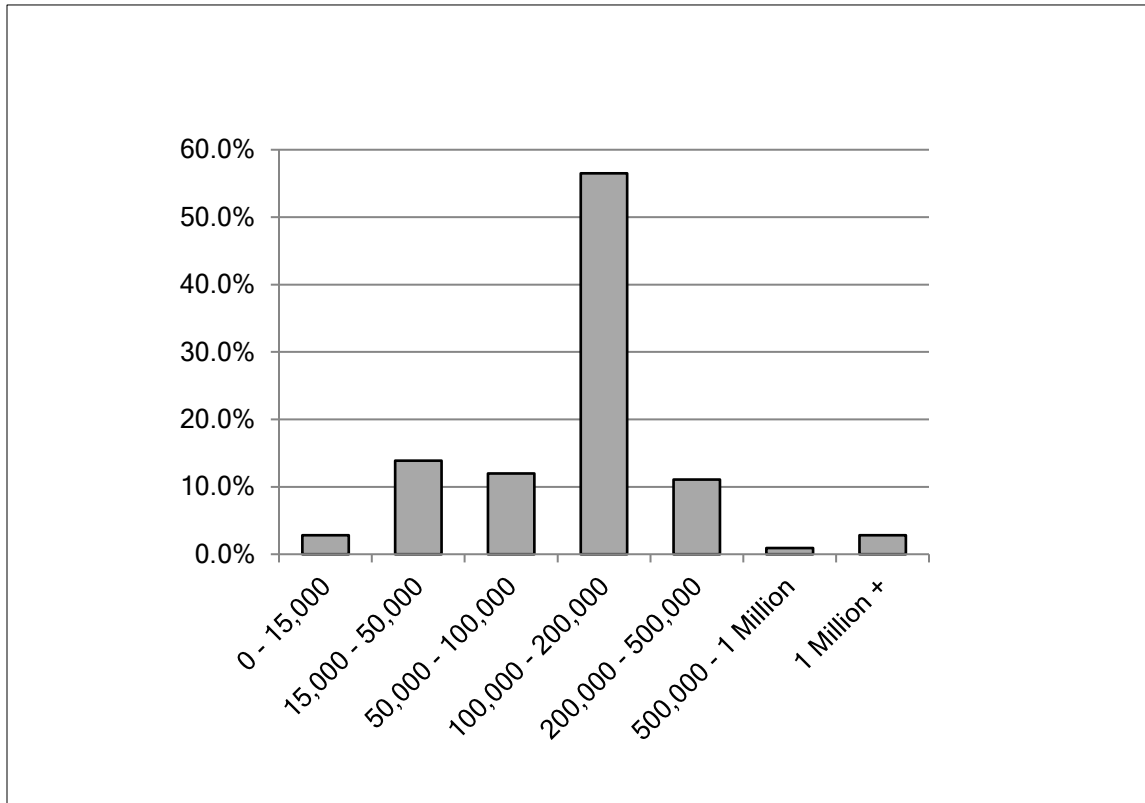
respondents were detailed in the comments section; four of the comments were eliminated due to duplicity with the offered choices and nine of the comments indicated a psychological evaluation as a requirement.

Question ten addressed barriers to women and ethnic minorities in the hiring process. Agencies were asked if they felt that any of the hiring steps inhibit the successful hiring of ethnic minorities and or women. Almost 81 percent answered no while 19 percent answered yes. Of those that answered yes four agencies indicated that they felt the physical ability test is too demanding for females and two agencies indicated that the requirement to be an EMT was a barrier due to the cost that is incurred by the candidate. Both of the identified barriers identified exist in the CRFD, confirmation of this in other agencies provides insight and answers to the researcher's original research question number four "what obstacles are present preventing the successful recruitment of ethnic minorities and women in Cedar Rapids." Question eleven asked respondents if any of the previously stated barriers have been addressed by alterations in the hiring requirements and or steps in an effort to gain more diversity. Eighty percent of respondents indicated that no steps had been taken to adjust the qualifications or hiring steps, of the 20 percent that indicated that they had altered the qualification or steps the predominant change in the process has been trying different physical ability test vendors or requirements and no indication of success was offered. Question twelve was designed to solicit information on recruitment budgeting by asking if their agency has a budget line specifically dedicated to recruitment activities. Over 80 percent of respondents report that they don't have a dedicated recruitment budget and of the nearly 20 percent that do have a budget the largest amount identified was \$8,000.

Questions thirteen and fourteen addressed additional barriers in the hiring of women and ethnic minorities specifically focusing on the perceived interest and qualifications of the identified classes in the jurisdictions of the respective agencies represented. Sixteen percent of respondents indicated that they felt that no barriers exist. Forty-five percent feel that there is a lack of ethnic minorities interested in the fire service while 32 percent feel that there is a lack of women interested in the fire service. Additionally, 25 percent of respondents feel there is a lack of qualified women available, and almost 26 percent feel that there is a lack of qualified ethnic minorities in their communities. Finally, almost 52 percent report a lack of women and 45 percent report a lack of ethnic minorities in their communities that apply. All barriers identified provided additional information to answer original research question four “what obstacles are present preventing successful recruitment of ethnic minorities and women in Cedar Rapids.” Question fourteen asked respondents if they have employed a process or program to address the lack of interested or qualified candidates in their application process. Twelve percent offered alterations in their process, all of which were to recruit in high schools, colleges, and trade schools.

The target audience survey was also distributed to over 800 recipients with a submission total of 107. Sixty-nine of the completed surveys were disqualified for not meeting the target audience criteria therefor only 38 were analyzed for results. Questions one and two asked the candidate to declare their ethnicity and gender while question three asked their rank. Twenty-three of the respondents identified as female, nineteen identified as an ethnic minority, and three respondents identified themselves as being both female and of an ethnic minority. Ethnic minorities represented in the survey results included Hispanic, African American, Asian, Native American, Greek, Lithuanian, and European. Question three was asked to ensure an adequate

mix of ranks which was realized by respondents reporting ranks from entry level firefighter all the way to chief of the department. Question four asked what is the population serviced in their respective jurisdictions. Figure 2 outlines the results. Respondents reported a population served ranging from a low of less than 15,000 to a high of over 1 million. The predominant population served was 100,000 to 200,000.



*Figure 2. Population Served*

Question five asked the respondents to identify the number of uniformed personnel employed by their agencies. The answers ranged from one to 1,400. Questions one through five were designed to ensure that the survey responses were representative of all ethnicities, sexes, ranks, and size of departments that serve a wide range of populations.

Questions six and seven asked the respondent to detail how they became aware of firefighter positions in their agency when they applied and if they personally recruit other women

and minorities. This question solicited information to answer the researchers original research question three “what is being done by other fire departments and private organizations to recruit and hire ethnic minorities and women”. Almost 70 percent of the respondents indicated that they were made aware of their position through informal recruitment such as word of mouth from a friend or relative. Twenty percent reported learning of the position through formal advertisement mechanisms and 24 percent reported that they were recruited based on their race and or gender. Answers to question seven indicated that 60 percent of women and ethnic minorities actively recruit people of their same gender and or ethnicity.

Questions eight through thirteen were qualitative in nature to gain an understanding of the underlying reasoning, opinions, and motivations of the respondents. Information analyzed is barriers in hiring a diverse workforce, removal of said barriers, benefits of a diverse workforce, and the negative attributes of not having a diverse workforce. Question eight asked the respondents to detail what barriers exist in the recruitment of ethnic minorities and women and Question nine asked how they recommend removing the identified recruitment barriers. The predominant answer for ethnic minorities was the lack of a robust ethnic population in their community for which they were unable to offer a solution other than recruitment outside of their geographic region. In relation to that answer, four respondents indicated that there are social and cultural norms present in other ethnicities that are a barrier which is an answer to the original research question four “what obstacles are present preventing the successful recruitment of ethnic minorities and women in Cedar Rapids.” It was reported that it is hard to overcome those barriers when the responders, educators, and recruiters do not look the same as those being served. Three other recruitment barriers were identified in the answers to question eight; lack of information about maternity standards for females, lack of education on the physical demands of

the career, and lack of targeted recruitment directed at women and minorities. All solutions identified that agencies need to employ active recruitment targeting women and ethnic minorities that provide a complete understanding of the careers physicality, pay, benefits, and work environment.

Questions ten and eleven of the target audience survey were similar to question ten posed in the general recruitment survey in that they asked the respondents to identify what barriers are present in the hiring process itself and what is recommended to remove the identified barriers. Respondents identified two significant barriers; EMT certification and the physical ability test. The only solutions offered for the EMT requirement were the elimination of the EMT requirement or providing EMT training after a candidate is hired which would allow in-house tutoring and afford the candidate the ability to study and concentrate on the curriculum as part of the career as opposed to obtaining education while trying to work another job or raise a family. Solutions for the physical ability test included; offering multiple education and practice sessions, using a validated test, elimination of the physical ability test, and different physical standards for women that are specifically matched to the duties that will be performed.

In question, twelve respondents were asked to detail what they feel are the positive attributes of a diverse workforce. Twenty of the thirty respondents felt that it is important that the physical makeup or look of the workforce should reflect the demographics of the community that they serve. It was reported that diversity allows the community to see that the agency is invested in inclusion and makes the customers feel more welcome and better cared for in times of need. Also it was reported that with different cultural and social norms ethnic minorities and women often feel more comfortable when being cared for or educated by those that look like them and understand their culture. Finally one of the biggest positives identified by having a

diverse workforce is the presence of women and minorities aids in the overall organizational understanding of how different sexes and ethnicities interact with each other in the workforce as well as the community. Finally, question thirteen asked the respondents to detail what they feel is the negative attributes of not having a diverse workforce. This question illustrates the answer to the researcher's original research question “what are the negative impacts to the CRFD of not having ethnic and gender diversity.” The majority of respondents offered the exact opposite of the positive attributes that were illustrated in question twelve. Additional negatives that have been identified are

- language barriers;
- lack of community engagement;
- a one-sided view of work and life;
- social club atmosphere;
- elitism;
- complacency;
- group think;
- racism; and
- lack of trust.

The diversity interview with the Assistant City Manager of Cedar Rapids Sandi Fowler was the final method utilized for this project. This was an in-person interview conducted on December 15, 2016. A complete transcript of the interview can be found in Appendix A.

The first question of the interview asked S. Fowler to state her name and title. The second question asked S. Fowler in her experience what is the importance of recruiting ethnic minorities and women in the fire service. She indicated that she feels it is important that a

workforce reflects the demographics of the community. By mirroring your community it is easier for responders to better understand the cultures, opinions, and viewpoints of those we serve. Further explanation revealed that it is easier to recruit members of a targeted class when you look like them, and it portrays a picture of inclusion (S. Fowler, personal communication, December 16, 2016). The third question inquired how the Cedar Rapids community views ethnic and gender balance in the CRFD, Cedar Rapids Police Department (CRPD), and City of Cedar Rapids workforce in general. S. Fowler explained that the community is aware that we as an organization do not currently reflect the demographics of the community. It was emphasized that the CRFD, in particular, does not have sufficient diversity as evidenced by the fact that “there are currently no African Americans and only a handful of females, Hispanics, and Asians” employed by the fire department. S. Fowler explained that she learned this through her eight years serving as the community liaison before her role as Assistant City Manager. She relayed that she frequently encountered women and minorities at community meetings that would inquire as to why the City of Cedar Rapids does not employ more people of color and minorities (S. Fowler, personal communication, December 16, 2016).

Question four inquired what S. Fowler feels are the negative organizational impacts of not having sufficient ethnic and gender diversity which again identified answers to the researcher's original research question “what are the negative impacts to the CRFD of not having ethnic and gender diversity”. It was relayed that if you don't represent a given demographic in the community, you run the risk of missing their interests. Further explanation revealed that there are internal consequences as well; S. Fowler stated that “it is impossible to anticipate what attracts someone to the workforce if their given demographic is not represented in employment” and potentially there is the chance that cultural bias will be created that will cloud our judgement

as decision makers (personal communication, December 15, 2016). Original Research question two asked “what efforts are being made by the City of Cedar Rapids Human Resources Department to recruit ethnic minorities and women. This research question was answered by S. Fowler when she explained that currently no recruitment steps had been implemented to specifically target women and ethnic minorities. Although there are no current processes in place in regards to diversity recruitment or employment S. Fowler did explain in her answer to question six that in early 2017 the City Manager’s Office will be convening a group called the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Taskforce to investigate internal culture, recruitment, and customer service directed at females and minorities (personal communication, December 15, 2016).

Research Question four asked, “what obstacles are present preventing the successful recruitment of ethnic minorities and women in Cedar Rapids.” To answer this, questions seven and eight asked S. Fowler what roadblocks exist in the recruitment of ethnic minorities and women in public safety. She offered that she feels it is difficult for women and minorities to picture themselves in a public safety position when we as an organization have not shown them the path to becoming a successful employee. To elaborate further, S. Fowler stated that “it is imperative that we as an organization find a way to make women and ethnic minorities understand why they would love the job; we need to connect with them” (personal communication, December 15, 2016).

### **Discussion**

Information obtained from the surveys, interview and literature review provided valuable insights into removing barriers in the recruitment and hiring of ethnic minorities and women in the CRFD. The analysis was focused on the negative impacts of not having sufficient ethnic and

gender diversity, current recruitment efforts of the City of Cedar Rapids, other fire department and private sector recruitment initiatives, and obstacles present in the successful recruitment of ethnic minorities and women.

Due to the visibility of the fire department in times of emergency as well as routine training and education, the fire service is looked at as problems solvers and leaders in the community. To better serve the community it is important to look like the community you serve through the adequate representation of all demographics. However, the CRFD finds themselves in the same situation as the majority of the nation in its employment of women and ethnic minorities. According to the 2010 United States Census, the population of the United States consists of 50.8 percent females, 12.6 percent black or African Americans, 4.8 percent Asians, and 16.3 percent Hispanic or Latino (US Census Bureau, 2010). As indicated in Table 2 the population breakdown of Cedar Rapids is very similar in overall demographic but is lacking in diversity of employment.

Table 2

*Cedar Rapids Demographics vs. Employment Demographics*

Ethnicity and Gender	Population Percentage	Employment Percentage
Female	50.9%	3.4%
Male	49.1%	96.6%
White	88%	98.6%
African American	5.6%	0%
Asian	2.2%	0.7%
Hispanic	3.3%	1.4%
Multiracial	2.9%	0%
Native Hawaiian	0.1%	0%
American Indian	0.3%	0%

To change the face of the department and encourage diversity and inclusion takes a commitment by management to actively recruit ethnic minorities and women as indicated by Fox et al. (2006). Although it was identified in the interview with S. Fowler that Cedar Rapids is not currently participating in any minority or female recruitment programs a new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Taskforce will be launched in early 2017 to investigate internal culture, recruitment, and customer service directed at females and minorities (S. Fowler, personal communication, December 15, 2016). This program will be administered by a group of internal leaders that will interface with members of the community to try and begin solving the problem if diversity in the City of Cedar Rapids. According to Fox et al. (2006) some of the most

successful recruitment methods for women and ethnic minorities are the involvement of the community at churches, schools, and community events.

Much of the literature review, interview responses, and analysis of the surveys focused on the negative impacts of not having sufficient ethnic and gender diversity. Extensive literature was identified and analyzed to begin answering this question and guide the creation of the interview and survey questions. One of the first areas of literature that was reviewed was how an organization would perform in a time of crisis. When responding to an emergency, it must be understood that we are dealing with a diverse group of customers that operate with different social and cultural norms. It is common for responders to simply not understand or be able to make sense of these differences without diverse representation therefore causing confusion, and in some cases, the inability to provide adequate service. To counteract this Osilaja (2009) explains that having diversity in a time of crisis contributes to the overall ability of a team to make sense of a problem and ultimately come up with a solution. S. Fowler gave similar insight when she explained that you have the potential to miss the interests of a given demographic if not directly represented in the workforce (personal communication, December 15, 2016). The target audience survey also yielded supporting information that mirrored the literature review finding. Responses from question twelve indicated that it is felt that lack of diversity in the workforce will cause negatives such as language barriers, a one-sided view of work, life, or problem-solving, complacency, and lack of trust. Admittedly emergency response is at times just a small portion of work that is performed by fire service personnel. The subject of language barriers was also reviewed in the context of public education and other non-emergency interactions. Sagen (2008) pointed out that fire prevention personnel are increasingly requesting

fire prevention materials and safety regulations to be translated into languages other than English to conduct business.

Lack of trust is a key issue that needs to be addressed due to insufficient diversity in the fire service. In the FIRE 20/20 study Sagen (2008) points out that often minorities do not utilize 911 for true emergency due to lack of trust. The lack of trust is not specifically towards the firefighter as a person, but often there is a lack of trust due to misinformation or the absence of culture-specific education. Ultimately this causes a subculture not to have a full understanding of what firefighters do, what the specific goals of the department are, what specific services are provided, and in many cases a cultural fear of authority. One respondent to question thirteen in the target audience survey pointed out that as a minority he/she has encountered minority customers that have isolated themselves due to the organization being complacent to the needs of the community, it was pointed out that cultural misunderstandings can cause an “us versus them” mentality by both the emergency responders and the customers. To counteract this, it is important to educate the public as well as responders not only about the importance of diversity but what those cultural differences are and how to overcome them. In an organization that does not have sufficient diversity or feels that the status quo is okay, it is incumbent upon leadership to take the first step. At times this may be difficult because many of our current leaders are still from an era in which segregation and intolerance were acceptable according to McNeil (2008). The first step in correcting the problem is to start with diversity recruitment. According to Roberts (2012b) recruitment of a diverse workforce needs to be a top priority of every fire chief while at the same time ensuring that those hired can perform at their best to be successful in the organization.

There are not just negatives to our customers due to the lack of diversity, but there are also significant internal negatives that affect the workforce. In reviewing the target audience survey, it was found that all 38 respondents elaborated in the comments section of question thirteen about the negative aspects of not having a diverse workforce. Internal negatives that were offered by the respondents include; a one-sided view or work, a social club atmosphere, elitism, racism, and lack of trust between employees. These obviously affect the internal working environment but also pose an obstacle to successful female and ethnic minority recruitment. Fox et al. (2006) explain that if a fire department does not portray a clear message about the value of diversity, does not foster an accepting environment, and does not develop or enforce harassment policies, this can create a negative perception of the organization and ultimately discourage a female or minority candidate from applying. This premise is supported by question eight of the target audience survey in which respondents were asked to identify barriers that are present in the successful recruitment and hiring of women and ethnic minorities. Examples offered were; female misunderstandings about the physical requirements of the job due to a primarily male workforce, internalized stereotypes about race, gender, sexual orientation, and nationality, as well as the lack of information being distributed about maternity policies for new mothers. S. Fowler was able to offer similar insight when she relayed that in recruiting women and ethnic minorities to work in public safety the City of Cedar Rapids has not found a way to show the path to becoming a successful public safety employee therefore they are unable to see themselves doing the job (S. Fowler, personal communication, December 15, 2016).

In addition to social and cultural barriers to recruitment, the researcher identified barriers that were present in the hiring process specifically. The two primary barriers identified in the

hiring process were the physical ability test for females and the EMT requirement for both females and ethnic minorities. Although the researcher was unable to substantiate the EMT requirement being a barrier through literature review, it was cited as a barrier by ten of the respondents to question ten of the target audience survey. Suggestions offered by respondents to question eleven to overcome this obstacle were either elimination of the requirement or in-house EMT training after the candidate has been hired. Although there is an increased cost to the department in training the candidate after being hired the researcher does find value in that suggestion. By allowing the candidate to undergo EMT training during the academy phase or some defined period of time at the beginning of employment, it would offer the candidate the ability to focus on job-specific training while working in the fire service as opposed to working in another non-related field. Ultimately the candidate would have the benefit of learning through application. Additionally, it was pointed out that the cost of obtaining EMT training and certification before employment is a significant financial burden for many minorities. Elimination of this financial burden certainly has the potential to attract more candidates.

Many women feel that the physical ability test is a barrier in the hiring process. In fact, almost 75 percent of the female respondents to question ten of the target audience survey felt that the physical ability test was a barrier in the hiring process. The majority of the comments pointed out that there is not sufficient information available about the test before testing and several pointed out that there was not a sufficient number of practice sessions available. In some cases, no practice was allowed before the test occurring. These findings pointed the researcher towards the understanding that many of the departments that were surveyed were giving physical ability tests that are not validated. This was echoed by the study done by Hulett et al. (2008) in which less than 50 percent of the women that they surveyed were given a validated physical

ability test such as the CPAT. In fact, that lack of validation causes the female to be at a disadvantage because the strength weighted components of the test have not been validated for both men and women. To overcome this Fox et al. (2006) indicate that it is important to “use a fair and valid selection process that measures what is really required for the job” in key initiative eight outlined in “Achieving and Retaining a Diverse Fire Service Workforce” published by the IAFF. The suggestion offered by respondents to question eleven of the target audience survey included; use of a validated physical ability test, more practice provided by the agency, task specific physical ability tests, elimination of time limits, and recruitment of female candidates from sports or exercise venues.

Perhaps the simplest challenge faced by the CRFD will be to adjust the recruitment practices that are in place. As outlined earlier there are currently no diversity recruitment practices in effect. According to Sendelbach (2013) it is imperative that an organization illustrate the need for qualified firefighters while the organization is responsible for recruiting diverse candidates to fill this need. The previous discussion has focused on changing culture, the beliefs, and thought processes which are ultimately the premise of adaptive change. Once this change is realized it is important that the proper recruitment steps are analyzed, enacted, measured, and adjusted as necessary. Literature review and the results of the general recruitment survey have offered many valuable practices that work in other areas across the country and can be adapted for use in Cedar Rapids. The biggest organizational impact realized through the research process is that the City of Cedar Rapids and the CRFD needs to rely less on informal recruitment and enhance active recruitment specifically by engaging females and ethnic minorities in the organization and interfacing with them in the community. By engaging current ethnic minorities and women in the workforce and taking active steps to reach other members of

the community, it will show that the organization supports a culture of inclusion. Rizzo (2014) echoed this premise when it was explained that recruiters that are female and or of an ethnic minority are used in the recruitment process it sends a message to the public that the organization has a commitment to diversity. This is supported by responses to question seven of the general recruitment survey in which three respondents indicated that they had realized an increased level of success in recruiting women and ethnic minorities through the use of a recruitment committee that is comprised of all ages, races, and sexes. Fox et al. (2006) specifically indicate in key initiative six found in “Achieving and Retaining a Diverse Fire Service Workforce” that organizations “need to use minority and women recruiters” to be successful in inclusion.

Research has indicated a shift from older traditional methods of advertisement in newspapers and magazines has shifted towards websites and social media. As technology continues to advance and the world becomes more reliant on electronic communication it only makes sense that that fire service needs to follow suit. In fact, in question seven of the general recruitment survey, nearly 70 percent of respondents indicated that their organizations have evolved to using websites and social media as a significant tool in recruitment with success in reaching more women and ethnic minorities. Even though it has been shown that social media and websites have been effective it is important that organizations also rely on other means of recruitment as well. Fox et al. (2006) identified other successful strategies such as minority TV/radio, and publication ads, direct mail interest cards, new or special reports, female TV/radio and publication ads, cadet/explorer programs, and the mentoring of prospective candidates. Responses to question seven of the recruitment survey also identified success in their organizations through explorer programs, career outreach, interaction at trade schools, and mailers that target women and minorities. Roberts (2012b) reports that increased success in

recruitment can be realized through active recruitment at sports and fitness centers, colleges, and medical facilities, all of which have not been utilized by the CRFD. Although this approach will require funding and personnel resources to accomplish, it is important to go out and actively recruit the candidates that you are seeking. It is explained by Query (2014) that it is important to take an active approach to recruiting outside of the office as well. As indicated by the survey results 45 percent of respondents indicated that they recruit in schools or colleges, almost 42 percent make community group presentations, 32 percent utilize explorer or cadet programs, and 29 percent utilize open houses in recruitment. Other successful practices offered in the comments section are; job fair visits, having a specific outreach class in the high school, joint efforts with EMS education agencies, targeting military veterans, and even barbershop visits. Ultimately improved recruitment is going to have to be a collaborative effort starting with top management and flowing through all levels of the organization. The goal needs to be the engagement of women and ethnic minorities in the recruitment process by leaving the comfort of the office to engage the female and minority community at the street level in areas such as community groups, churches, schools, and job fairs just to name a few. Gannon (2013) suggests connecting various groups that have cultural, sexual, and even religious similarities with those that you are trying to reach.

The subject of diversity and fairness is certainly not new to the fire service or the workforce in general as evidenced by the Civil Rights Act of 1964 but it has been shown through the literature review, surveys, and interview that the CRFD as well as the majority of the United States fire service is still struggling to find the right balance. I have long felt through anecdotal observations that the CRFD does not measure up to the demographics of the City of Cedar Rapids, and as illustrated in Table 2 the numbers certainly don't lie. The CRFD in

predominately comprised of white males with very few women, Hispanics, Asians, and no African Americans. The CRFD has a long tradition of pride and excellence in service that all members believe in from the top down but the study clearly indicates that without sufficient diversity there are many areas of the community that could receive an increased cultural understanding, social acceptance, and ultimately better service delivery through a more diverse and inclusive workforce.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are a result of data obtained and analyzed from the diversity interview with Cedar Rapids Assistant City Manager Sandi Fowler, the fire department diversity recruitment survey, and the target audience diversity survey. The literature review provided valuable information to aid in drafting the surveys and interview, as well as substantiates their results. All findings illustrated that the CRFD does not have sufficient diversity to match the demographics of the community. The results demonstrate the need for CRFD to investigate further methods to increase diversity, implement new recruitment practices, and monitor their success over time to make necessary adjustments as the face of the community changes. The researcher has identified four recommendations to increase the diversity of the CRFD.

The first recommendation is to develop a recruitment committee that is inclusive of all ages, sexes, and ethnicities represented in the Cedar Rapids community. The mission of the committee will be to develop a recruitment initiative. Currently, the CRFD does not employ all demographics that are present in the community; therefore the researcher recommends a collaborative effort with other City departments, educational leaders, and community leaders to ensure diverse representation. The committee shall be the driving force in the research,

implementation, and monitoring phases of the recruitment initiative. It is important that the CRFD leadership obtain buy-in from all stakeholders for the initiative to be successful. Internal committee members will need to embrace the reasons why diversity is important and how the organization, as well as the City of Cedar Rapids, will benefit. The external members will have to trust that the organization which has identified a shortcoming in diversity truly embraces the potential gains of inclusion. The researcher recommends that this group acts as a subcommittee to the planned City of Cedar Rapids Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Taskforce that will convene in early January 2017.

The second recommendation is for the CRFD to begin using a more formal active recruiting process rather than just advertising for openings. According to the survey, interview results, and literature review simply advertising for a job does not meet the criteria for recruitment. To actively recruit the organization needs to “leave the office” and interface with the demographics that we are seeking for employment. By employing the recruitment committee, the CRFD will be able to develop relationships with other demographics, cultures, and social circles that were not previously realized. The results of increased interaction will be for the organization to seek out what other females and ethnic minorities are seeking in employment and what they feel are additional barriers that have not been identified by this study. The researcher realizes that the literature review, interview, and surveys of other organizations have limitations in that it has not provided all of the answers to the problem. The researcher is not naïve in thinking that each geographic region, demographic, and culture doesn’t have its own unique challenge. By interfacing with the Cedar Rapids community, the committee will be able to identify the challenges specific to this community.

The third recommendation is to seek out potential candidates in their community. The effort needs to be placed in identifying where people of different ethnicity and sex are comfortable. Suggestions offered are churches, social venues, trade schools, community colleges, universities, and minority schools. There needs to be a certain level of comfort on the part of the candidate so that they feel their questions will be answered or that they are comfortable asking what they would like to know about the career. The researcher recommends specific attention is given to the grade schools, middle schools, and high schools in the community that are located in neighborhoods that have a higher percentage of diverse population. The ability to reach kids early and get them interested in the fire service or public safety over a period of years gives the CRFD the unique ability to help in shaping their education, their life choices, and hopefully ultimately their career choice. The added benefit of cultivating this long term relationships is gaining the trust of their parents and other community members.

The fourth recommendation is to monitor the success of the recruitment process over time so that adjustments can be made as the demographics of the City of Cedar Rapids change. It is important that committee members, department leaders, City of Cedar Rapids leaders, and community leaders realize will be an evolving process over time. Monitoring and adjustment of the process over time will allow the City of Cedar Rapids to reinforce the importance of diversity and inclusion and illustrate to all involved that diversity is a long-term process that the CRFD is committed to through the fostering of new relationships both internal and external.

Ultimately the researcher recommends that all public and private organizations make diversity in employment a priority. The benefits of learning your community demographics, cultures, and social norms will certainly aid in greater service, productivity and relations with the

customers we serve, the peers we interact with at work, and a greater acceptance of all the people in our community, state, and the country.

## References

- Bachman, E. G. (2012, January 1). Preplanning to address cultural diversity. *Fire Engineering*, *165*(1), 87-89.
- Bucher, R. D. (2015). Preparing for the future. In J. McPherson (Ed.), *Diversity consciousness: Opening our minds to people, cultures, and opportunities*. (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York City, NY: Pearson.
- Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2015). *Employed person by detailed occupation, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity*. Retrieved from <https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat11.htm>
- Cedar Rapids Fire Department. (2016). *City of Cedar Rapids Fire Department 2015 annual report*. Cedar Rapids, IA: City of Cedar Rapids.
- City of Cedar Rapids. (2016). *About Cedar Rapids*. Retrieved from [http://www.cedar-rapids.org/discover\\_cedar\\_rapids/about\\_us/index.php](http://www.cedar-rapids.org/discover_cedar_rapids/about_us/index.php)
- Edwards, S. T. (2010). *Fire service personnel management* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Boston: Pearson.
- Fox, K. A., Hornick, C. W., Hardin, E. (2006). International association of firefighters diversity Initiative achieving and retaining a diverse fire service workforce. Retrieved from <http://www.iaff.org/hr/diverserecruitment/media/iaff%20diversity%20report.pdf>
- Frazier, C. D. (2011, August 25). Vulcan Society pushes for diversity in the fire department. *New York Amsterdam News*, 3-39.

Gannon, J. (2013, October 2). Fundraisers pursue diversity at Pittsburg summit. *Pittsburg*

*Post-Gazette (PA)*. Retrieved from <http://www.post-gazette.com/businessnews/2013/10/02/Fundraisers-pursue-diversity-at-Pittsburgh-summit/stories/201310020065>

Haynes, H. J. G., Stein, G. P. (2016). *U.S. fire department profile – 2014*. Quincy, MA:

National Fire Protection Association.

Hook, R. (2015). How do you value female talent? Start by valuing all talent. *Fire*, 110, 39-41.

Hulett, D. M., Bendick, M., Thomas, S. Y. & Moccio, F. (2008). Enhancing women's inclusion

in firefighting in the USA. *The International Journal of Diversity in Organizations, Communities, & Nations*. 8(2), 190-204.

International Association of Women in Fire and Emergency Services. Issues concerning women

and firefighting. (2013). Retrieved from <https://www.i-women.org/?s=issues>

Martin, J. (2013, August 13). A fairer way to make hiring and promotion decisions. *Harvard*

*Business Review*. Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2013/08/a-fairer-way-to-make-hiring-an>

McNeil, J. J. (2008). Diversity in the Fire Service: A Problem or a solution? Retrieved from

<http://www.fireengineering.com/articles/2008/10/diversity-in-the-fire-service-a-problem-or-a-solution.html>

Osilaja, P. D. (2009). Issues of diversity in crisis management. *Disaster Recovery Journal*, 70-

73.

- Query, J. T. (2014, September 1). Diversity in risk management education. *Risk Management*, 61(7), 1-7.
- Rizzo, T. (2014, May 19). Fire departments search for ways to spark more diversity in their ranks. *The Kansas City Star (MO)*. Retrieved from <http://www.kansascity.com/news/local/article375989/Fire-departments-search-for-ways-to-spark-more-diversity-in-their-ranks.html>
- Roberts, M. (2012a, January). Diversity should be management's top priority, not just labor's. *Fire Chief*. Retrieved from <http://www.firehouse.com/leadership/ar/iaff-morrison-on-diversity>
- Roberts, M. (2012b). Turn up the heat. *Fire Chief*, 15(2), 39-45.
- Scott, S. (2013). About workplace diversity. Retrieved from <http://smallbusiness.chron.com/workplace-diversity-1199.html>
- Shackelford, W. (2010). *Strategic diversity recruiting process: It's the process that creates success*. Retrieved from [http://www.workforcediversitynetwork.com/res\\_articles\\_strategicrecruiting\\_Shackelford.aspx](http://www.workforcediversitynetwork.com/res_articles_strategicrecruiting_Shackelford.aspx)
- Thill, J. (2016, May 9). Diversity and inclusion – one fire chief's perspective. Retrieved from <http://www.nvfc.org/diversity-and-inclusion-one-fire-chiefs-perspective/>
- U.S. Department of Defense. (2012). Diversity and inclusion strategic plan. Retrieved from [http://diversity.defense.gov/Portals/51/Documents/DoD\\_Diversity\\_Strategic\\_Plan\\_%20final\\_as%20of%2019%20Apr%2012%5B1%5D.pdf](http://diversity.defense.gov/Portals/51/Documents/DoD_Diversity_Strategic_Plan_%20final_as%20of%2019%20Apr%2012%5B1%5D.pdf)
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security. (2016). *Commitment to a diverse workforce*. Retrieved from <https://www.dhs.gov/homeland-security-careers/diversity>

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. (2016). *Laws, regulations, & guidance*.

Retrieved from <https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/regulations/>

United States Census Bureau. (2010). *Quickfacts from the U.S. Census Bureau*. Retrieved from

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045216/00>

United States Census Bureau. (2012). *U.S. census bureau projections show a slower growing, older, more diverse nation a half century from now*. Retrieved from

<http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/population/cb12-243.html>

United States Census Bureau. (2016). *Cedar Rapids quickfacts*. Retrieved from

<http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/1912000>

United States Fire Administration. (2015, October). *Executive Leadership*. (Student Manual).

Emmitsburg, MD: NFA.

United States Fire Administration. (2014). *Strategic Plan Fiscal Years 2014-2018*. Retrieved

from [https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/strategic\\_plan\\_2014-2018.pdf](https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/strategic_plan_2014-2018.pdf)

Willing, L. F. (2011, December 19). Diversity in the fire service: the fear factor. *Fire Rescue 1*.

Retrieved from [https://www.firerescue1.com/cod-company-officer-](https://www.firerescue1.com/cod-company-officer-development/articles/1204254-Diversity-in-the-fire-service-The-fear-factor/)

[development/articles/1204254-Diversity-in-the-fire-service-The-fear-factor/](https://www.firerescue1.com/cod-company-officer-development/articles/1204254-Diversity-in-the-fire-service-The-fear-factor/)

Winston Jr. J. (2014, November 7). Five reasons diversity is important in the fire service.

Retrieved from <http://firefightertoolbox.com/5-reasons-diversity-is-important-in-the-fire-service/>

## Appendix A

Diversity Interview Transcript of Assistant City Manager Sandi Fowler December 15, 2016

1. Please state your name and title.

My name is Sandi Fowler; I am the Assistant City Manager for the City of Cedar Rapids.

2. In your experience detail the importance of recruiting ethnic minorities and women in the fire service.

It is important to reflect the makeup of the community that you serve so that you can better understand their cultures, opinions, and viewpoints. Additionally, it is easier to recruit the targeted classes when you look like those that you are seeking and portray a picture of inclusion.

3. How do you feel the Cedar Rapids community views the ethnic and gender balance in the CRFD, CRPD, and City of Cedar Rapids workforce in general?

The community is aware that we currently don't reflect the demographics of the community, especially in the fire department. There are currently no African Americans and only a handful of females, Hispanics, and Asians. I have learned this through my previous position as community liaison which in which I served for eight years. I frequently encountered women and minorities at community meetings that asked why the City of Cedar Rapids does not employ more people of color and women in all aspects of employment.

4. What are the negative organizational impacts of not having sufficient ethnic and gender diversity?

Well, you will miss the interests of a given demographic if not directly represented in the workforce. Internally, it is impossible to anticipate what attracts someone to the workforce if their given demographic is not represented in employment. Additionally, it is probable that cultural bias will have the ability to cloud our judgment as decision makers and recruiters.

5. What steps have been taken by the City of Cedar Rapids to recruit ethnic minorities and women?

Currently, there are no diversity recruitment steps that have been implemented.

6. Are there other recruitment methods that have been identified and are being developed for implementation?

The City Managers Officer has created a diversity, equity, and inclusion taskforce that will be meeting for the first time after the first of the year. This committee will be a city-wide group comprised of members of leadership that will dig into the internal culture, recruitment, and customer service.

7. What roadblocks do you feel exist in recruiting ethnic minorities for public safety employment?

Seeing themselves in the job, as an organization we haven't shown them the path to becoming a public safety employee and how to be successful.

8. What roadblocks do you feel exist in recruiting women for public safety employment?

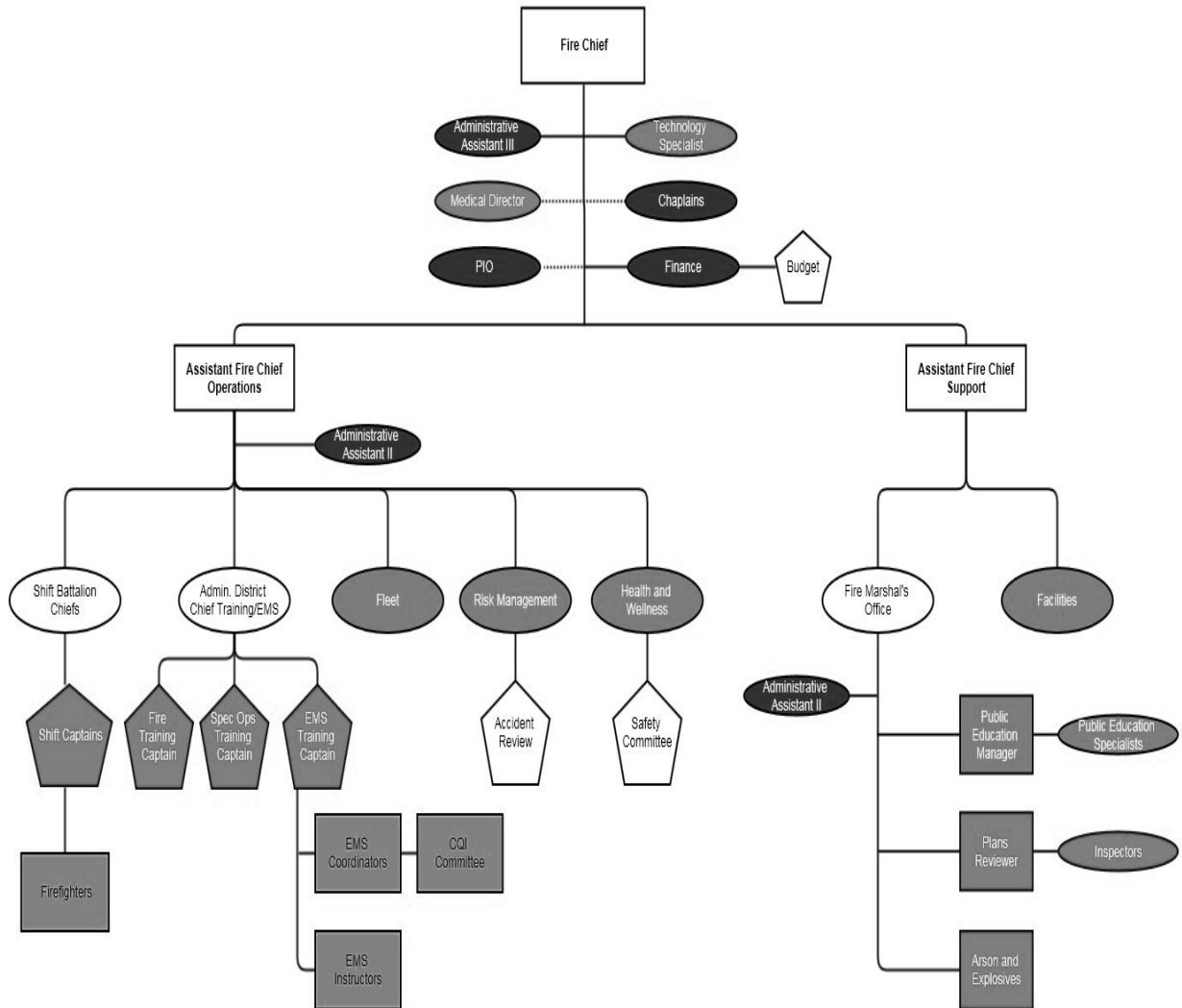
I will offer the same answer to the previous question.

9. Is there anything else you would like to add that I haven't addressed?

It is imperative that we as an organization find a way to make women and ethnic minorities understand why they would love the job. We need to connect with them.

Appendix B

CRFD Organizational Chart



## Appendix C

## Diversity in Fire Department Employment - Recruitment

Thank you in advance for taking this survey. My name is Battalion Chief Jason Andrews. I work for the Cedar Rapids Fire Department in Cedar Rapids Iowa. I am currently assigned as a Shift Commander. I am in the 4th year of the National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer Program. As part of the program I must complete an Applied Research Project in the area of Leadership. The topic that I have chosen is Diversity in Fire Department Employment. I know that everyone's time is valuable so I have attempted to make this survey as short as possible. My goal is to have all surveys completed by January 15, 2017. Thanks again for your assistance.

1. What is the name of your department/agency?

2. What is the population that your department/agency serves?

- 0 - 15,000
- 15,000 - 50,000
- 50,000 - 100,000
- 100,000 - 200,000
- 200,000 - 500,000
- 500,000 - 1 Million
- 1 Million +

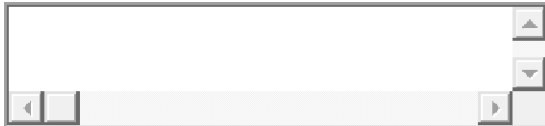
3. Number of sworn personnel.

4. Do you have a recruitment program that specifically targets ethnic minorities and/or women?

- Yes
- No

5. Who manages the recruitment within your organization? Choose all that apply.

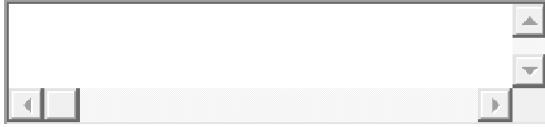
- Human Resources
- Fire Chief or member of the Command Staff
- Assigned to a uniformed employee, if so please detail in the comments section
- Dedicated civilian recruiter
- Other - detail in the comments section



6. What methods does your organization utilize in its recruitment efforts? Choose all that apply.

- Newspaper
- Television
- Magazines
- Radio
- Website
- Social Media such as Facebook, Twitter, etc...
- School/College Visits
- Community Group Presentations
- Engagement of Minority and Women Community Leaders
- Cadet/Explorer Programs

- Open Houses
- Other - Please detail in comments section



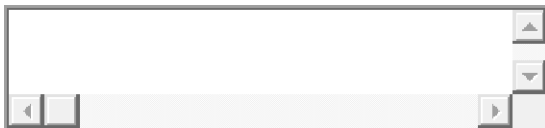
7. Has a specific method(s) proven more effective than others? If so please detail in the comments section

- Yes
- No



8. What are the entry requirements for your organization? Choose all that apply.

- Firefighter 1
- HazMat Operations
- Emergency Medical Technician
- Paramedic
- High School Diploma/GED
- College Degree
- Age
- Other - Please detail in the comments section



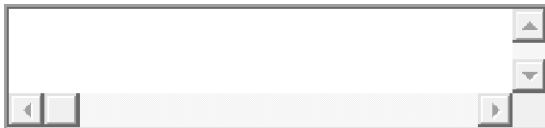
9. What are the application/hiring steps for your organization? Choose all that apply.

- Written Exam
- Physical Agility Test
- Background Screening
- Drug Testing
- Department Interview(s)
- Civil Service Interview(s)
- Other - Please detail in the comments section



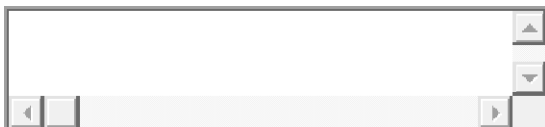
10. Do you feel any of the hiring steps inhibit the successful hiring of ethnic minorities and/or women?

- No
- Yes - Please detail in the comments section



11. Have you added, removed, or changed any of the application/hiring steps in an effort to gain more inclusion?

- No
- Yes - Please detail in the comments section



12. Do you have a dedicated recruitment budget?

- No

- Yes - Please detail in the comments section



13. What barriers does your organization face in the hiring of ethnic minorities and/or women?

- None
- Lack of ethnic minorities interested in the fire service
- Lack of women interested in the fire service
- Lack of qualified ethnic minorities
- Lack of qualified women
- Lack of ethnic minorities that apply
- Lack of women that apply
- Other - Please detail in the comments section



14. Do you employ a program or process that specifically addresses the previously stated barrier?

- No
- Yes - Please detail in the comments section

## Appendix D

## Diversity in Fire Department Employment – Target Audience

Thank you in advance for taking this survey. My name is Battalion Chief Jason Andrews. I work for the Cedar Rapids Fire Department in Cedar Rapids Iowa. I am currently assigned as a Shift Commander. I am in the 4th year of the National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer Program. As part of the program I must complete an Applied Research Project in the area of Leadership. The topic that I have chosen is Diversity in Fire Department Employment. I know that everyone's time is valuable so I have attempted to make this questionnaire as short as possible. My goal is to have all questionnaires completed by January 15, 2017. Thanks again for your assistance.

This questionnaire is intended to be completed by persons that are categorized as an ethnic minority and/or female. Please forward or make available to the appropriate personnel within your organization.

Please be advised that all answers to this survey will be kept confidential. Organization names and identities will not be included in this research project. All information obtained by this questionnaire will be compiled and only aggregate data will be published.

1. What is your ethnicity?

2. What is your gender?

3. What is your rank?

4. What is the population that your department/agency serves?

- 0 - 15,000
- 15,000 - 50,000
- 50,000 - 100,000
- 100,000 - 200,000
- 200,000 - 500,000
- 500,000 - 1 Million
- 1 Million +

\*5. Number of sworn personnel.

6. When you made the choice to become a firefighter how did you find out about the position?

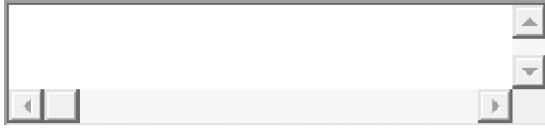
- Job Fair
- Advertisement - Please detail the method in the comments section
- Relative
- Friend
- Other - Please detail in the comments section

7. Do you personally recruit other ethnic minorities and/or women?

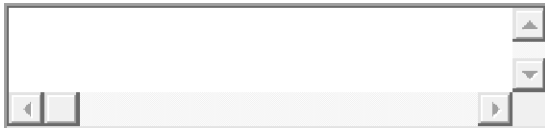
Yes

No

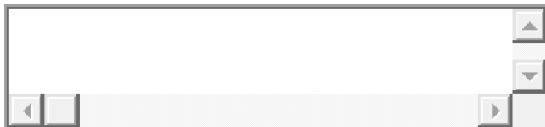
8. In your opinion what barriers exist in the recruitment of ethnic minorities and/or women?



9. How would you recommend removing these barriers?



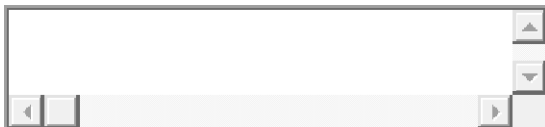
10. In your opinion what barriers exist in the hiring process for ethnic minorities and/or women?



11. How would you recommend removing these barriers?



12. In your opinion what are the positive attributes of having a diverse workforce?



13. In your opinion what are the negative attributes of a workforce that does not have sufficient diversity?

