



THE BUZZ

5th Edition

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE B KEEPERS

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

Business as usual hasn't been very usual for a long time now. Some changes we've all faced over the last couple of years have been difficult and unwelcome. On the other hand, there is at least one change that is both welcome and will help us grow as an organization and community partner. BS&L has committed to starting a **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) taskforce** that will help us identify means to grow equity and opportunity in the way we do business.

As a community bank, we take it as our mission—and a point of pride—to represent our customers and neighbors. It's vital that all individual members and diverse groups have a place at the table. This isn't about trying to manufacture *fairness*. It is about looking at the whole of our work and goals and first identifying how and why we will all benefit

from a more inclusive and representative model. We will take this information to develop strategies and practices that “bake in” a broader sense of holistic good in everything from lending to hiring, outreach and internal policies.

Vermont and its people are hardworking, compassionate, open, and... not very diverse. Regardless of why, we aren't satisfied with “that's just how things are.” Things are the way they are because there hasn't been a true evaluation of *why* they are a given way. By developing this DEI taskforce, we are modeling a different way of being and, if that can grow our ability to meet the needs of all people in our communities, then it is a worthy endeavor. BS&L believes that it is the right time to look toward business *unusual*—for everyone's benefit. 

